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Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects

Comprehensive review of special political missions

Security Council
Seventieth year

Identical letters dated 17 June 2015 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

On 31 October 2014, I convened a High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations to undertake a thorough review of United Nations peace operations today and the emerging needs of the future. I invited this panel to take a comprehensive look at how United Nations peace operations could continue to contribute to the prevention and resolution of conflicts and be best designed and equipped to deal with the challenges of tomorrow. I encouraged the panel to be bold and forward leaning and to engage widely in the course of their review.

I asked José Ramos-Horta, the former Head of State of Timor-Leste, to chair the Panel, and Ameerah Haq to be Vice-Chair. The Panel also included the following eminent personalities from around the world: Jean Arnault, Marie-Louise Baricako, Radhika Coomaraswamy, Abhijit Guha, Andrew Hughes, Alexander Ilitchev, Hilde F. Johnson, Youssef Mahmoud, Ian Martin, Henrietta Joy Abena Nyarko Mensa-Bonsu, B. Lynn Pascoe, Floriano Peixoto Vieira Neto, Rima Salah and Wang Xuexian.

I would be grateful if the report of the Panel, which has been transmitted to me in the enclosed letter dated 16 June 2015 from the Chair of the Panel, could be brought to the attention of Member States. I will study it carefully and will present to the Security Council and the General Assembly my proposals on how we can take forward the findings of this important work. My office will be in charge of following up on the recommendations, with close participation of all key departments and stakeholders. We see the task as nothing less than preparing the United Nations to rise to the peace and security challenges of the future.

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Many of the recommendations of the Panel relate to matters within the purview of the Secretary-General, while others will need the approval and support of the General Assembly or the Security Council. I look forward to working closely with Member States and other key partners as we review the report and determine how best to implement its recommendations.

(*Signed*) **BAN** Ki-moon

Letter dated 16 June 2015 from the Chair of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations addressed to the Secretary-General

In October 2014, you honoured us with our appointment as members of your High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations. As charged, we have worked over the last six months to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the state of United Nations peace operations, in the light of the emerging needs and evolving challenges they face. Since then, the Panel has considered a broad range of issues facing peacekeeping and special political missions, including the changing nature of conflict, evolving mandates, good offices and peacebuilding challenges, managerial and administrative arrangements, planning, partnerships, human rights and protection of civilians, uniformed capabilities for peace operations and performance.

United by our commitment to the Organization, and motivated by your encouragement to be bold and creative, we have worked to provide analysis and recommendations on how these instruments can better support the Organization's work to prevent conflict, achieve durable political settlements, protect civilians and sustain peace. We have wrestled with challenging issues such as the use of force, which has divided the Membership. We have endeavoured to balance the principles with the practical as change is propelled forward through both of these motors.

I was humbled by your appointment as Chair of the Panel as I remain continually grateful for the opportunity to have served as your Special Representative in Guinea-Bissau. It was my opportunity to repay, in some small measure, a debt to the United Nations for standing by the people of Timor-Leste in our years of need. The United Nations is a powerful presence, but its challenges are also its weaknesses.

Even as the United Nations Mission in South Sudan struggled to shelter those fleeing violence, there were too many beyond the reach of the mission who had to look within for the courage and strength to survive. Nyakhat Pal, a three-year-old South Sudanese girl, walked for four hours by foot to a United Nations Children's Fund-World Food Programme rapid response distribution centre in April 2014, leading her blind father. She had heard the United Nations was providing vaccines, food and water. Nyakhat received the help she hoped for and returned to her village to await the return of her missing mother. Nyakhat looked up to the United Nations with hope. Her tenacity and bravery was rewarded; her story should touch the most hardened of hearts, as it did mine. But her story should also shame us, for we have collectively failed the people of South Sudan. Despite the courageous efforts of some, we have as an international community fallen short, and continue to fall short, in Burundi, Iraq, Libya, Palestine, Syria, Yemen and Ukraine, among other places.

My fellow Panel members and I accepted this challenging assignment so as to contribute to a more credible, relevant and legitimate United Nations, effective in preventing and ending conflicts, making and sustaining peace so that Nyakhat, and her peers, can live in security and in freedom.

It is with great honour that I submit to you the Panel's report, entitled "Uniting our strengths for peace: politics, partnerships and people".

The report and its recommendations are based on an extensive consultation process carried out during the course of the past six months. The Panel received more than 80 written submissions from Member States, regional and other international organizations, civil society organizations, think tanks and United

Nations entities. These were of very high quality and greatly informed the Panel's thinking, but it is impossible to do them justice, and to address all the issues they raise, within the scope of the present report. The Panel has therefore asked that, if the entities which submitted them so agree, the Secretariat make them available through appropriate channels. We hope that the Secretariat will take them into account when considering the implementation of our report and in other internal reviews.

In addition, the Panel held regional consultations in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Europe and Latin America, all of which were well attended by Member States, regional and international organizations, civil society and think tanks. The Panel also participated in thematic workshops on the protection of civilians; the use of force; women, peace and security; and prevention and mediation and sustaining peace. To gather first-hand information on the concerns of communities and Governments hosting United Nations peace operations, as well as to listen to staff, local and other partners on the ground, Panel members visited three peace operations: the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) and the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA). Throughout, the Panel met many of your special representatives, special envoys, force commanders and other senior mission leaders, as well as staff at all levels, at Headquarters and in the field.

In New York, the Panel met with Permanent Representatives of Member States; the United Nations Secretariat and agencies, funds and programmes; the Security Council; the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (the Fourth Committee); the Administrative and Budgetary Committee (the Fifth Committee); and the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (the C-34). The Panel also maintained close communication with the members of the expert study on Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and the Advisory Group of Experts on Review of Peacebuilding Architecture to ensure a synergized approach in our respective areas of focus.

During these past six months, we have encountered numerous examples of the dedication and commitment of staff and leaders, both in field missions and at Headquarters. Our deep appreciation and admiration goes to the national and international, civilian and uniformed personnel of peace operations as well as to their national and international partners on the ground, many of whom risk their lives every day in some of the most dangerous places in the world in pursuit of peace, security and freedom. We are grateful to the many civil society organizations and think tanks who met with us and enriched our deliberations through their frank, rich and grounding perspectives. We are also very appreciative of the support, financial and in-kind, provided by Member States to the work of the Panel. Our particular gratitude goes to Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, the Netherlands and Timor-Leste, as well as the Center on International Cooperation, the International Peace Institute, the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs and the United Nations University.

I would like to thank the Governments of Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Egypt and Ethiopia for hosting our regional consultations. The Panel is grateful for the hospitality extended to us by the host Governments during our visits to China, Ethiopia, Finland, France, India, Japan, the Netherlands, Pakistan, the Russian Federation, Rwanda, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States. Finally,

we thank the Governments of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali and Senegal and the leadership and personnel of MINUSMA, MONUSCO, UNOWA and the United Nations Office to the African Union for so warmly receiving and supporting our visits.

When we commenced our work, you encouraged us to be bold and creative; we hope our report meets that expectation. On behalf of the Panel members, allow me to thank you for the privilege and the responsibility you have entrusted to us. It is our hope that the present report will contribute to a new generation of United Nations peace operations strengthened to meet today's and tomorrow's challenges.

Meanwhile, we are aware of the limits of the power of the United Nations to anticipate and prevent all tensions and violence and end wars. Expectations are naturally high, particularly among those most in need of our collective will, in need of the United Nations to act. But we also must acknowledge that the United Nations cannot be everywhere, every time, to solve every conflict in the world.

To my esteemed colleagues, Ameerah Haq, Jean Arnault, Marie-Louise Baricako, Radhika Coomaraswamy, Lt. Gen. (Retd.) Abhijit Guha, Andrew Hughes, Hilde Johnson, Alexander Ilitchev, Youssef Mahmoud, Ian Martin, Henrietta Mensa-Bonsu, B. Lynn Pascoe, Lt. Gen. (Retd.) Floriano Peixoto Vieira Neto, Rima Salah and Xuexian Wang, I am profoundly grateful for their wisdom and dedication throughout these long months of travel, meetings, reading and drafting, in all regions of the world.

We are very different people, from all regions of the world, with our own beliefs, experiences and sensitivities, but we have worked harmoniously together, united by our firm belief in the United Nations, its goals, ideals and principles. I am particularly grateful to Ameerah who, as Vice-Chair, provided me with great wisdom and invaluable advice.

To the tireless, dedicated and highly professional staff of the Panel secretariat, Bela Kapur, Tamara Al-Zayyat, Heather Belrose, Paul Keating, Moritz Meier-Ewert, Madalene O'Donnell, Suman Pradhan, Jessica Serraris and Mike Yuanhu Yuin, who supported the work of the Panel, my eternal gratitude and admiration. These staff members are the very best among the best serving the United Nations: dedicated, working many long hours and weekends and through holidays. I am deeply impressed by the quality of their work; they are highly competent international civil servants; they serve no Government or country; they loyally uphold only the principles and values enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

(*Signed*) José **Ramos-Horta**
Chair of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations

For Nyakhat and others

In April 2014, three-year-old Nyakhat Pal walked four hours leading her blind father and two dogs to a United Nations Children's Fund-World Food Programme (UNICEF-WFP) rapid response distribution centre in Pagak, Upper Nile State, of South Sudan. When Nyakhat heard the United Nations was providing vaccines, food, water and sanitation supplies at the centre, she hurried.

They walked those four hours through harsh and dangerous terrain. The area has seen serious fighting between opposition forces and the South Sudanese army, and peacekeepers of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan have been deployed to protect the civilian population and create a zone of safety. At the end of the journey, Nyakhat got what she had gone looking for: she received life-saving supplies before heading back to her village, another four hours by foot.

Nyakhat's story is at the heart of what the United Nations was created for, 70 years ago: "To reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights and in the dignity and worth of the human person." And today, Nyakhat's story still represents what the United Nations stands for, as well as for its shortfalls.

The Organization will remain relevant to the extent that it responds effectively to the expectations of people experiencing great hardship, sometimes in remote and inaccessible places, and who yet demonstrate enormous resilience, pride and bravery.

The Organization will remain legitimate to the extent that it acts as a voice for the unheard, seeking their views and ensuring their full participation.

The Organization will remain credible to the extent that it is served by leaders and staff who demonstrate courage, integrity, compassion and humility, and who act upon the norms, principles and values upon which the Organization was founded.

For many, peace operations are not simply something the United Nations does but what the United Nations is.

The work of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations over the past six months has been driven by the desire to take a dispassionate look at United Nations peace operations to ascertain their relevance and effectiveness for today's and tomorrow's world.

We hope that the analysis and recommendations contained here will live up to the spirit and the letter of the mandate entrusted to the Panel by the Secretary-General and to the expectations of Nyakhat and others: that the Organization will be there with them, for them.

Report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations on uniting our strengths for peace: politics, partnership and people

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Summary

United Nations Peace Operations in a changed and changing landscape

In 1948, the first peacekeeping mission and the first high-profile mediator were deployed as innovative solutions by a young United Nations. Nearly 70 years later, United Nations peace operations, which span peacekeeping operations to special political missions, good offices and mediation initiatives, are a central part of the Organization's efforts to improve the lives of people around the world. More than 128,000 women and men serve under the blue flag in almost 40 missions across four continents working to prevent conflicts, help mediate peace processes, protect civilians and sustain fragile peace processes.

United Nations peace operations have proven highly adaptable and have contributed significantly to the successful resolution of conflicts and to a declining number of conflicts over two decades. Today, however, there is evidence of a worrisome reversal of some of that trend and a widely shared concern that changes in conflict may be outpacing the ability of United Nations peace operations to respond. The spread of violent extremism, overlaid onto long-simmering local or regional conflicts and the growing aspirations of populations for change, is placing pressure on Governments and the international system to respond. As United Nations peace operations struggle to achieve their objectives, change is required to adapt them to new circumstances and to ensure their increased effectiveness and appropriate use in future.

A number of peace operations today are deployed in an environment where there is little or no peace to keep. In many settings today, the strain on their operational capabilities and support systems is showing, and political support is often stretched thin. There is a clear sense of a widening gap between what is being asked of United Nations peace operations today and what they are able to deliver. That gap can be, must be, narrowed to ensure that the Organization's peace operations are able to respond effectively and appropriately to the challenges to come. With a current generation of conflicts proving difficult to resolve and with new ones emerging, it is essential that United Nations peace operations, along with regional and other partners, combine their respective comparative advantages and unite their strengths in the service of peace and security.

Call for change

In many ways, United Nations peace operations have become more professional and capable over the past decade, but significant chronic challenges remain. Resources for prevention and mediation work have been scarce and the United Nations is often too slow to engage with emerging crises. Too often, mandates and missions are produced on the basis of templates instead of tailored to support situation-specific political strategies, and technical and military approaches come at the expense of strengthened political efforts. In the face of a surge in demand over the past decade, the Organization has not been able to deploy sufficient peacekeeping forces quickly and often relies on underresourced military and police capacities. Rapidly deployable specialist capabilities are difficult to mobilize and United Nations forces have little or no interoperability. Secretariat departments and United Nations agencies, funds and programmes struggle to integrate their efforts in the face of competing pressures, at times contradictory messages and different funding sources. United Nations bureaucratic systems configured for a headquarters

environment limit the speed, mobility and agility of response in the field. Those chronic challenges are significant but they can, and should, be addressed.

Four essential shifts

Four essential shifts must be embraced in the future design and delivery of United Nations peace operations if real progress is to be made and if United Nations peace operations are to realize their potential for better results in the field.

Politics must drive the design and implementation of peace operations

Lasting peace is achieved not through military and technical engagements, but through political solutions. Political solutions should always guide the design and deployment of United Nations peace operations. When the momentum behind peace falters, the United Nations, and particularly Member States, must help to mobilize renewed political efforts to keep peace processes on track.

The full spectrum of United Nations peace operations must be used more flexibly to respond to changing needs on the ground

The United Nations has a uniquely broad spectrum of peace operations that it can draw upon to deliver situation-specific responses. And yet, it often struggles to generate and rapidly deploy missions that are well tailored to the context. The sharp distinctions between peacekeeping operations and special political missions should give way to a continuum of responses and smoother transitions between different phases of missions. The United Nations should embrace the term "peace operations" to denote the full spectrum of responses required and invest in strengthening the underlying analysis, strategy and planning that leads to more successful designs of missions. Sequenced and prioritized mandates will allow missions to develop over time rather than trying to do everything at once, and failing.

A stronger, more inclusive peace and security partnership is needed for the future

A stronger global-regional peace and security partnership is needed to respond to the more challenging crises of tomorrow. Common purpose and resolve must be established from the outset of a new operation and must be maintained throughout through enhanced collaboration and consultation. The United Nations system too must pull together in a more integrated manner in the service of conflict prevention and peace. All of those partnerships must be underpinned by mutual respect and mutual responsibilities.

The United Nations Secretariat must become more field-focused and United Nations peace operations must be more people-centred

There must be an awakening of United Nations Headquarters to the distinct and important needs of field missions, and a renewed resolve on the part of United Nations peace operations personnel to engage with, serve and protect the people they have been mandated to assist.

New approaches

To ensure that United Nations peace operations are able to reliably play their critical roles in the international peace and security firmament in the years to come,

significant change is required across four of the most important areas of the work of United Nations peace operations and of the United Nations.

Conflict prevention and mediation must be brought back to the fore

The prevention of armed conflict is perhaps the greatest responsibility of the international community, and yet it has not been sufficiently invested in. A decade ago, the World Summit stressed the need for a "culture of prevention". Since then a number of changes have been made but a prevention culture has not been embraced by the Organization and its Member States. Member States have not sufficiently invested in addressing root causes of conflict nor has the United Nations generally been able to engage early enough in emerging crises.

The United Nations must invest in its own capacities to undertake prevention and mediation and in its capacity to assist others, particularly at the national and regional levels. The Security Council, supported by the Secretariat, should seek to play an earlier role in addressing emerging conflicts and must do so with impartiality. At the global level, the United Nations must mobilize a new international commitment to preventing conflict and mobilizing partnerships to support political solutions. It must find ways to draw upon the knowledge and resources of others beyond the United Nations system through civil society, including community, religious, youth and women groups, and the global business community.

Protection of civilians is a core obligation of the United Nations, but expectations and capability must converge

Significant progress has been made in promoting norms and frameworks for the protection of civilians. And yet, on the ground, the results are mixed and the gap between what is asked for and what peace operations can deliver has widened in more difficult environments. The protection of civilians is a national responsibility and United Nations peace operations can play an important role in supporting Governments to execute that responsibility. United Nations missions and non-governmental actors have important unarmed and civilian tools for protecting civilians and working with communities.

The United Nations must rise to the challenge of protecting civilians in the face of imminent threat, and must do so proactively and effectively, but also with recognition of its limits. Protection mandates must be realistic and linked to a wider political approach. Closing the gap between what is asked of missions to protect civilians and what they can provide demands improvements across several dimensions: assessments and planning capabilities, timely information and communication, leadership and training, as well as more focused mandates.

The Secretariat must be frank in its assessments to the Security Council about what is required to respond to threats to civilians. In turn, Member States should provide the necessary resources and lend their influence and leverage to respond to threats against civilians. When a protection crisis occurs, United Nations personnel cannot stand by as civilians are threatened or killed. They must use every tool available to them to protect civilians under imminent threat. Each and every peacekeeper, whether military, police or civilian, must pass that test when crisis presents itself.

Clarity is needed on the use of force and in the role of United Nations peace operations and others in managing armed conflict

While some missions are working to implement ceasefires or implement peace agreements, others are operating in environments with no peace to keep. They are struggling to contain or manage conflict and to keep alive the prospects for a resumption of a peace process. The High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations believes that the United Nations may see more, not less, of those situations in the future. Its existing concepts, tools and capabilities for peace implementation do not always serve those missions well. For such situations there must be a new approach to mandating and resourcing missions, while also setting out the limits of ambition of what the United Nations can achieve in such settings. Every effort must be made to establish minimum conditions to ensure a mission's viability and to define "success" more realistically in such settings.

Where armed conflict is ongoing, missions will struggle to establish themselves, particularly if they are not perceived to be impartial. Although efforts are under way to strengthen capabilities, United Nations peacekeeping operations are often poorly suited to those operating environments, and others must come forward to respond. The Panel believes that there are outer limits for United Nations peacekeeping operations defined by their composition, character and inherent capability limitations. Peacekeeping operations are but one tool at the disposal of the Security Council and they should perform a circumscribed set of roles. In that regard, the Panel believes that United Nations troops should not undertake military counter-terrorism operations. Extreme caution should guide the mandating of enforcement tasks to degrade, neutralize or defeat a designated enemy. Such operations should be exceptional, time-limited and undertaken with full awareness of the risks and responsibilities for the United Nations mission as a whole. Where a parallel force is engaged in offensive combat operations it is important for United Nations peacekeeping operations to maintain a clear division of labour and distinction of roles.

The Panel has heard many views on the core principles of United Nations peacekeeping. The Panel is convinced of their importance in guiding successful United Nations peacekeeping operations. Yet, those principles must be interpreted progressively and with flexibility in the face of new challenges, and they should never be an excuse for failure to protect civilians or to defend the mission proactively.

Political vigilance is needed to sustain peace

Peace processes do not end when a peace agreement has been signed or an election held. The international community must sustain high-level political engagement in support of national efforts to deepen and broaden processes of inclusion and reconciliation, as well as address the underlying causes of conflict. Peace operations, like other actors, must work to overcome deficits in supporting conflict-affected countries in sustaining peace, including supply-driven templates and an overly technocratic focus on capitals and elites, and the risk of unintentionally exacerbating divisions. Strong support for reconciliation and healing is also critical to preventing relapse into conflict.

Peace operations have a key role to play in mobilizing political support for reforms and resources for critical gaps in State capacity, as well as supporting others to revitalize livelihoods in conflict-affected economies. Engagement with affected communities should help build confidence in political processes and responsible State

structures. Missions must focus first and foremost on creating political commitment and the space for others to address important elements in sustaining peace.

The security sector must be a particular focus, owing to its potential to disrupt peace in many countries, with the United Nations in a convening and coordinating role, if requested. A significant change in policing approaches is needed to better support national police development and reform. Those efforts should be linked to the whole "justice chain", ensuring an integrated approach between human rights and rule of law capacities. In sustaining peace, the United Nations system must overcome structural and other impediments to working together, including through more innovative resourcing options. Missions must work closely with their national counterparts and United Nations and regional partners to ensure that the least disruption is caused when they transition and depart.

Empowering the field and strengthening the foundations

The approaches outlined above must be underpinned by important changes to the design and delivery of better peace operations.

Setting clear direction and forging common purpose

It is essential that the United Nations develop more realistic and contextualized political strategies. They must be based on improved analysis, strategy and planning. Achievable mandates can be crafted through meaningful and effective consultations between the Security Council, Secretariat, regional actors and, when uniformed forces are required, with troop- and police-contributing countries. The Panel believes that the use of two-stage mandating should become a regular practice. Sequenced authorization of mandates will help design better-tailored missions with more focused and prioritized mandates. The Panel believes it is past time to institutionalize a framework to engage troop- and police-contributing countries and the Secretariat to truly forge a common and realistic understanding of the mandate and what capabilities and standards are required to implement the mission.

Improving the speed, capability and performance of uniformed personnel

The United Nations and its partners must overcome significant constraints to rapid deployment in response to crises. That should include a more robust framework of standby first responder capabilities that the Security Council can draw upon in response to the crises of the future as well as a modest United Nations rapid response capability to establish an initial mission presence and to reinforce missions in crisis. The United Nations has sustained for a decade high deployment levels in difficult environments. A new strategic force generation approach is being attempted and must be resourced and supported by stronger political efforts, including through greater consultation with current and potential contributors as well as a wider willingness to commit forces. Those efforts must be accompanied by internal changes in how the United Nations mobilizes, deploys and sustains its uniformed personnel. Innovative approaches are required to obtain specialized capabilities and to define a logistical support approach purpose-built to deliver greater tactical mobility. A more comprehensive medium-term framework for defining capabilities and performance improvement should be built from ongoing initiatives, along with a stronger global training partnership to address priority training requirements.

Strengthening global and regional partnerships

The United Nations must play a leading role in forming a vision for a stronger global-regional partnership for peace and security to ensure that the Security Council is able to call upon a more resilient and capable network of actors in response to future threats. To that end, the United Nations should embrace a future role of not only working alongside regional organizations but also enabling them to share the burden in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. In particular, the United Nations should deepen its strategic partnership with the African Union and on a case-by-case basis provide enabling support, including through more predictable financing, to African Union peace support operations when authorized by the Security Council, even as the African Union builds its own capacity and resources for that purpose.

Putting policy into practice

The United Nations has still to put into practice many of its policy commitments, including improving the selection, preparation and accountability of senior mission leaders, through merit-based selection processes and increased appointment of women to senior leadership positions. The Panel proposes a number of ways to more effectively integrate women, peace and security and human rights throughout mission life cycles and across mandated tasks, including through strengthened backstopping and advice and promoting accountability for integrating gender and human rights at the senior mission leadership level, as well as by operationalizing the Secretary-General's Human Rights Up Front agenda. Vital for today's more insecure settings is improving safety, security and crisis management systems and improved medical standards as well as ensuring that compensation and fatalities management are responsibly managed for the future. The impact and positive presence of missions should also be enhanced by better communications, both globally and locally, and improving the Organization's commitment to environmental impact. The United Nations should ensure effective uptake of field appropriate technology in support of its peace operations.

Engaging with host countries and local communities

Engagement must increasingly be regarded as core to mission success. By shifting from merely consulting with local people to actively including them in their work, missions are able to monitor and respond to how local people experience the impact of peace operations. That helps the mission to ensure that it does no harm. Ongoing community engagement also helps the mission to design better protection strategies to ensure the mission is more effective in improving the lives of the people it is deployed to serve and protect.

Addressing abuse and enhancing accountability

Ten years after the United Nations began systematically addressing it, sexual exploitation and abuse in peacekeeping operations are continuing, to the enduring shame of the Organization, its personnel and the countries which provide the peacekeepers who abuse. The deplorable acts of a few must not be allowed to drag down the Organization, its staff and its troop- and police-contributing countries. It is in everyone's interest that accountability be improved and justice provided. Immunity does not apply to civilian personnel for sexual exploitation and abuse.

Troop-contributing countries must vigorously investigate and prosecute national personnel. The Secretary-General should report on actions taken and not taken by individual Member States in follow-up to credible allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse. The United Nations should ensure that individual victims of sexual exploitation and abuse are compensated for the harm they suffer from United Nations personnel.

Improving support systems to enable more responsive and accountable peace operations

The messages received from the field have been resounding: United Nations administrative procedures, particularly in the field of human resources, are failing missions and their mandates. The budgets of peace operations are more than four times larger than the rest of the United Nations Secretariat, and 55 per cent of all Secretariat staff serve in peace operations and most of those in hardship duty stations. And yet, United Nations field operations are tied to an administrative framework that treats their requirements as "exceptions" to Headquarters-focused policies, administrative procedures and practices. Delegations of authority must be reassigned to those who have the responsibility to deliver, and support policies and procedures must be reviewed to support more effective, efficient field operations. A more field-focused administrative framework must be matched by strong assurances of responsible and accountable management of resources.

Supporting innovation and important resourcing requirements

The Panel encourages Member States to maintain the momentum of reform in the resourcing of United Nations peace operations and to explore further opportunities to improve both operational effectiveness and efficiency across missions, including through regional support approaches. The Panel encourages a more strategic and results-oriented focus in budget preparation and oversight, and innovations such as regional support and new approaches to delivering mandates through programmatic funding should be pursued. Essential to more successful prevention and mediation efforts by the United Nations, as well as for more effective political missions on the ground, is the need to make progress on supporting the funding and backstopping arrangements of United Nations special political missions. In that regard, the Panel calls upon the General Assembly to support the proposals suggested in 2011 by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.

Improving Headquarters leadership, management and reform

The current Secretariat structures entrusted with supporting the peace and security endeavours of the United Nations are at times hampering the effective design and delivery of United Nations peace operations through insufficient strategic guidance, coordination and emphasis on political solutions. Previous efforts to solve those problems through coordination or other structures have failed to deliver meaningful change. The Panel believes the status quo must change. The Secretary-General should develop options for restructuring the Secretariat peace and security architecture, with a view to strengthening leadership and management and removing compartmentalized Headquarters approaches to ensure more effective field-oriented support to United Nations peace operations. The Secretary-General should consider the creation of an additional Deputy Secretary-General position responsible for peace

and security; establish, from existing Secretariat resources, an analysis and planning capacity to support United Nations peace operations; and develop a proposal for a single "peace operations account" to finance all peace operations and their related backstopping activities in future.

Uniting our strengths

The United Nations must unite its strengths, which include politics, partnership and people, to meet the challenges ahead. Political strategies must drive peace operations. Partnerships will be essential to future success in the face of long-running and new crises. And people must be firmly put at the centre of the efforts of United Nations peace operations.

Many of the constraints to improving peace operations are political in nature, and can be addressed through political will to find compromise and to respond to long-standing challenges. That must be accompanied by a willingness to allow resources to be managed more flexibly so that scarce budgetary resources are used to achieve results in dynamic environments. In a time of fiscal constraint, the Panel has reflected carefully on its recommendations to ensure they do not further burden the system with unnecessary costs. It is convinced that if sequenced effectively, any investments will be offset by cost reductions in downsizing missions. Improving analysis, strategy and planning, strengthening prevention and mediation, more strategic approaches to force generation and improving rapid response tools are important modest investments that can lead to earlier engagement and can lead to more focused and achievable mandates and more streamlined missions.

With support from Member States, United Nations peace operations and their partners can position themselves to deliver more effectively on behalf of the international community. In the coming decade, the United Nations will need to live up to important responsibilities to deliver on the essential objectives of preventing conflict and mediating peace, protecting civilians and sustaining peace. It should also provide the vision, the call to action and the road maps for a stronger global and regional partnership for the future. The crises of tomorrow will be challenging ones and will demand institutions, indeed a network of institutions, that can respond swiftly and effectively when they are needed most.

That, in turn, asks of Member States their unflinching commitment to strengthening the Organization to better deliver on the Charter's universally shared principles and ideals and to respond to the needs of people — women, men, children — whose lives are threatened or have been shattered by armed conflict. It is for those purposes, that we, the United Nations, should unite our strengths to improve United Nations peace operations for the future.

"We often hear it said that the United Nations has succeeded here, or has failed there. What do we mean? Do we refer to the purposes of the Charter? They are expressions of universally shared ideals, which cannot fail us, though we, alas, often fail them. Or do we think of the institutions of the United Nations? They are our tools. We fashioned them. We use them. It is our responsibility to remedy any flaws there may be in them. It is our responsibility to correct any failures in our use of them."

Dag Hammarskjöld, New York, May 1956

I. Setting the Context

1. United Nations peace operations are a unique instrument for advancing international peace and security. When used wisely and with resolve, and when United Nations personnel serve with irreproachable integrity and professionalism, United Nations peace operations can meet the expectations of those whose lives are ravaged by armed conflict and help the Organization to fulfil the purposes of the Charter of the United Nations.

2. In 1948, the first peacekeeping mission and the first high-profile mediator were deployed as innovative efforts by a young United Nations as provisional solutions for particular problems. Nearly 70 years later, United Nations peace operations, including peacekeeping and special political missions as well as good offices and mediation initiatives, are now central to the Organization's peace and security efforts. Member States have turned increasingly to those tools to address evolving threats to international peace and security. Over the past quarter of a century, millions of committed women and men have deployed across the globe under the blue flag in the service of peace.

3. The United Nations is today the largest provider of international peace operations, with more than 128,000 civilian and uniformed personnel serving in 39 missions across four continents, and United Nations envoys working assiduously to prevent or resolve armed conflicts.[1]

4. In the light of the growing demands placed upon peace operations, the Organization has exerted significant efforts to strengthen them and ensure they adapt to new and changing roles. The report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations chaired by Lakhdar Brahimi fifteen years ago (A/55/305-S/2000/809) galvanized political, institutional and financial support for reform.

5. However, many of those operations and their personnel face significant challenges. They are deployed in complex conflict settings, often in insecure environments. All too often they do not have the capabilities required to implement their mandates and, in some cases, they operate in the absence of an underpinning peace process. In such conditions, peace operations struggle to achieve their objectives.

[1] That figure includes 16 peacekeeping operations and 23 political missions. It does not include sanctions committees, monitoring groups and thematic special political missions. All statistics relating to the number of missions, personnel and budget were provided by the United Nations Secretariat.

6. Against the backdrop of those challenges, the Secretary-General commissioned the present independent review. After comprehensive consultations with a broad range of stakeholders across the globe, the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations proposes a set of recommendations designed to ensure that United Nations peace operations can better meet current and future peace and security demands and the expectations of the people they serve.

Context

7. Beginning in the early 1990s, the number and intensity of armed conflicts had declined. That was in large measure achieved through the peaceful settlement of conflicts, accompanied by peace support efforts at the local, national, regional and international levels. The United Nations has played a critical role in supporting that positive trend through its peace operations as well as through the work of its wider political, human rights and development pillars.

8. Despite the overall spread of peace over the past quarter century, there has been a reversal of the positive recent trends in the past three years, and conflicts have been on the rise again. Most worryingly, the number of civil wars has increased in the last few years and attacks perpetrated by Governments and armed groups against civilians have risen for the first time in a decade.[2] That increase is compounded by the rise in violent extremism, which can be conducive to terrorism.[3] A historic high of more than 50 million uprooted people today suffer the fate of internal displacement or refuge abroad, resulting in a significant burden for host countries and severely stretching the capacity of humanitarian agencies to respond.[4]

9. In addition to indiscriminate killing, appalling abuses are perpetrated against civilians in the midst of today's armed conflicts. Sexual violence remains a pervasive tactic of modern war. Women and girls are subject to mass abduction, as well as forced conversion, marriage and sexual slavery. Men and boys are more often forcibly recruited to fight or face extrajudicial execution. In 2014 alone, more than 3,000 children were forcibly recruited by armed forces and the true number may be much higher, according to the report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict (A/68/878-S/2014/339).

10. Many of today's armed conflicts are more intractable and less conducive to political resolution. Many of them result from entrenched long-term conflict punctuated by episodic relapse into large-scale violence. Those conflicts further demonstrate that notions of inter-State and intra-State conflict have blurred and there is no linear path to peace.

11. Complex linkages at the local, national, regional and global levels shape conflicts and demand a more nuanced approach to their resolution. Transnational illicit networks trafficking in drugs, weapons, people and money have embedded themselves in many conflicts, feeding on them, and fuelling them with funds and weapons. They now span continents, and prey upon less resilient conflict-affected

[2] All conflict-related data in the present report are taken from products and information available at the Uppsala University Conflict Data Program. Available from www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/datasets/ucdp_prio_armed_conflict_dataset.

[3] Security Council resolution 2178 (2014) notes that violent extremism can be conducive to terrorism and it was with that meaning that the term was used in the present report.

[4] Figures available from www.unhcr.org.

and post-conflict States, where they become entrenched through corruption, rent-seeking and predation.

12. A growing number of violent extremist and terrorist groups represent a particularly malignant threat to international peace and security. Their use of shocking violence, exploitation of distorted but powerful religious symbolism and absolutism presents a grave challenge to peace. In some cases their maximalist objectives directly threaten the very existence of nation States. The militant groups harness localized grievances to radical transnational agendas, and use today's global connectedness to move information, money, fighters and weapons across States and into and between conflict areas.

13. At the same time, many conflicts are caused by bad governance, where the State is captured by elites who monopolize its levers for power and enrichment and use the security apparatus to contain social and political challenges to their rule. When peaceful protests and efforts at conflict prevention fail to bring about compromise, violence often ensues and, in its path, the reopening of historic wounds, the hardening of religious or ethnic competitive identities, regional entanglements and, at times, the accentuation of international rivalries.

14. In those contexts, efforts to sustain peace have foundered partly owing to a failure to establish inclusive political arrangements, a fair sharing of resources and just accommodation of ethnic and religious diversity. More often than not, root causes and conflict drivers are not effectively addressed. In some contexts, mediation and negotiation have proven inadequate in the face of the absolutist positions held by extremist groups that scorn compromise solutions. Enduring, renewed or new conflict, slow political progress and the frequent failures of peace talks, compounded by the lack of peace dividends on the ground, have led to frustration and disillusionment with negotiation efforts. And yet, recent and ongoing militarized responses have provided only short-term and in some cases fleeting or illusory success while further exacerbating some of the grievances underlying the conflict.

15. Looking to the future, the rise of civil society and the growing voice of the people are creating strong momentum for the spread of democracy and human rights across the globe. The growth of the world economy has supported unprecedented levels of wealth and lifted millions out of poverty. In addition, the spread of technology, especially social media networks, is bringing citizens of the world closer together and awakening them to the indivisible nature of human freedoms, strengthening their resolve to address global challenges together.

16. At the same time, many of today's dynamics with the potential for conflict will likely intensify. Geopolitical power is shifting. In many countries, the struggle for political inclusion and respect for human rights is challenging the status quo. Aspiration and opportunity are dangerously misaligned for the poor in many of the world's most densely populated and youngest countries. Economic inequality has widened both within and across States and is creating the potential for political frictions. More broadly, a rapidly growing population is creating ever-higher demands on food, energy and water, which calls for new solutions for the management and distribution of those scarce resources. Changing climatic conditions and the overuse of land and waterways will further exacerbate tensions and expand the number of potential hot spots.

Situating United Nations peace operations

17. Recalling the Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations, the Panel believes that by "uniting our strengths" to maintain international peace and security, the United Nations can better respond to the volatile scenarios that lie ahead. United Nations peace operations can and do make important and at times decisive contributions to conflict prevention and resolution, but they cannot and should not be asked to respond to all threats.

18. The term "United Nations peace operations" used in the present report embraces a broad suite of tools managed by the United Nations Secretariat. Those instruments range from special envoys and mediators; political missions, including peacebuilding missions; regional preventive diplomacy offices; observation missions, including both ceasefire and electoral missions; to small, technical-specialist missions such as electoral support missions; multidisciplinary operations both large and small drawing on civilian, military and police personnel to support peace process implementation, and that have included even transitional authorities with governance functions; as well as advance missions for planning. All of those missions draw upon expertise mobilized by the Secretariat, including mediation and electoral specialists, and human rights, rule of law, gender, police and military experts.

19. The United Nations has deployed joint missions with regional organizations and provided logistical support to African Union military operations. The United Nations has also established innovative missions, such as with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic. A recent regional crisis response mission to respond to Ebola, while humanitarian in nature, is another example of the complex field operations mounted by the United Nations today.

20. Increased reliance on United Nations peace operations has led to an all-time high level of deployment. The United Nations has 16 peacekeeping operations in the field. The numbers of military and police have more than tripled since the year 2000 from 34,000 to 106,000, and civilian staff in peacekeeping operations now number more than 19,000. The United Nations also provides logistical support to more than 20,000 African Union personnel. Contemporary missions last on average three times longer than their predecessors, reflecting challenging operating environments and slow progress in the political processes they are supposed to support. Smaller civilian political missions have grown in number, size and responsibilities, with 23 political missions now in place with more than 3,000 personnel, which include 10 special envoys and their teams. In addition, there are 13 sanctions panels and monitoring teams which are also funded as political missions.[5]

21. United Nations peace operations have proven to be effective and cost-efficient tools when accompanied by a political commitment to peace. In the past decade, the United Nations has supported relatively successful peace processes and political transitions, including in Nepal, Sierra Leone and Timor-Leste. United Nations peace operations in Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti and Liberia have accompanied those countries during turbulent but overall successful transitions. Now in various stages of drawdown, those missions are grappling with the questions of how much support is enough to ensure that the peace they helped to build can sustain itself, and how to transition to more appropriate forms of assistance in the longer term.

[5] Information provided by the United Nations Secretariat.

22. The record of some other missions, however, has been less positive. Missions have ended when Government consent for their presence was withdrawn or because the patience of the Security Council wore thin. In some cases, departed missions have later been forced to return in the face of renewed conflict. An older generation of small ceasefire-monitoring missions has endured for decades with no exit in sight. Lack of any serious progress in resolving the decades-old political situations underpinning them raises the question of whether they should be ended.

More challenging assignments

23. Today, many contemporary United Nations missions are struggling in more complex political contexts and difficult operating environments. A decade ago, many peace operations were deployed following the end of hostilities and the signing of a comprehensive peace agreement. Today, a growing number of missions operate in remote and austere environments where no political agreement exists, or where efforts to establish or re-establish one have faltered. They face ongoing hostilities and parties who are unwilling to negotiate or otherwise undermine the presence of a mission by condoning or inflicting restrictions on its ability to operate. The challenge is multiplied in large, infrastructure-poor countries where it becomes much harder for United Nations missions to make their presence felt. Logistical supply lines in vast, landlocked and often insecure operating environments are often stretched thin and left vulnerable to disruption.

24. Several missions fall into those scenarios. For example, the United Nations mission deployed in Mali is struggling to maintain an effective presence in the conflict zone, and its peacekeepers are facing persistent deadly attacks from extremist groups. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the mission has, for 16 years, been buffeted between regional- and community-level conflicts, and has recently been given a mandate to conduct offensive operations. In Darfur, the hybrid African Union-United Nations mission is a mere shadow of its original purpose, restricted to delivering on the narrow objectives of monitoring conflict, patrolling camps and stimulating local efforts to build dialogue. In South Sudan, an ambitious agenda to support the newly independent country collapsed in an outbreak of civil war, and the mission has been largely forced into a reactive posture protecting civilians, including tens of thousands of people sheltering within United Nations compounds. In each of those cases, the United Nations and its partners have been unable to marshal the political effort necessary to provide solutions to those conflicts and ultimately to facilitate a responsible exit strategy for those missions.

25. The desperate situations in Libya, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen illustrate the limits of prevention and mediation when strong united international resolve is absent and when regional interests are polarized. United Nations political missions operating in parallel with international security forces have taken steps towards transition in Afghanistan and Somalia. In Iraq, however, the country has plunged back into the horrors of conflict. The Middle East Peace Process, despite United Nations participation, has stalled.

26. In increasingly dangerous environments, United Nations mission personnel have been under attack in a number of missions, including Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Mali and Somalia, and are threatened. Since 2013, United Nations missions have been forced to undertake evacuations or major relocations in the Central African Republic, Libya, the Syrian Arab Republic

and Yemen. Enhanced investment in defensive countermeasures helps to regain a measure of freedom of movement and initiative, but only at the margin. United Nations missions, like others struggling to operate in such environments, are often reduced to delivering a limited set of critical tasks.

27. Expectations have only grown, particularly with respect to the capacity of United Nations missions to protect civilians across vast areas of operations. Although United Nations peace operations have at times responded with conviction to prevent such threats from materializing or worsening, and to provide safety to civilians, at other times they have failed to show sufficient resolve and action in the face of threats to civilians.

28. In addition to the political, operational and security challenges confronting its missions, the cases of sexual exploitation and abuse committed by some United Nations personnel, despite new conduct and discipline systems and a zero-tolerance policy, continue to cause great harm to victims as well as to the enterprise of United Nations peace operations and the United Nations itself.

Recent efforts to strengthen peace operations

29. For more than a decade, the Secretary-General, United Nations Secretariat and Member States have made efforts to strengthen United Nations peace operations. Many recommendations proposed in previous reviews have been implemented to address enduring challenges, albeit in the face of consistently growing demands. Those have included the provision of early financial commitment authority, deployment stocks and a standing police capacity for peacekeeping operations; the strengthening of the rule of law and related capacities; and the establishment of policy, partnership and lessons-learned capacities and expertise on the protection of civilians and gender issues. Mediation and electoral support has also been strengthened. Special representatives of the Secretary-General have been appointed to advocate for the rights of children affected by armed conflict and against sexual violence in conflict. A new peacebuilding architecture has been established, including a peacebuilding fund. Regional preventive diplomacy offices have been opened in Central Africa, West Africa and Central Asia, and a specialized mediation Headquarters capacity has been created. A dedicated field support department has been established to better support the global portfolio of field operations. Integrated operational teams have been created in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations at Headquarters to bring together the political and operational dimensions and support backstopping of missions. Long-awaited increases in troop reimbursement rates have been agreed.

30. In other areas, however, less progress has been made, including in the development of military standing capacities, faster deployment timelines, more effective analysis, planning and the integration of United Nations efforts to sustain peace. Resources have not always matched the ambition of mandates and the Security Council has not always received the frank assessments it needs to make better-informed decisions. Troop contributors are still not sufficiently consulted on mandate formulation and renewal, which at times impedes the implementation of mandates, as does the deployment of troops without sufficient or appropriate equipment and assets. Whereas peacekeeping missions receive backstopping resources at United Nations Headquarters, recommendations to improve the funding and backstopping of special political missions made in 2011 have yet to be taken up

by the General Assembly. Conflict prevention, although a core activity of the Organization, remains seriously underresourced. United Nations mediators have not always enjoyed sufficient or unified international political support, which undermines peacemaking efforts. Finally, the United Nations system has yet to unite its strengths and realize its potential to deliver better results together.

31. Since the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) in 2000 and successive resolutions, the Secretariat and United Nations peace operations have made some progress in advancing the agenda on women, peace and security. The agenda includes increased involvement of women in prevention and mediation efforts led by United Nations special envoys and the integration of gender dimensions into policies and strategies in areas such as electoral assistance and protection of civilians. Women protection advisers ensure better monitoring, analysis and reporting on conflict-related sexual violence, and gender-disaggregated data is incorporated when reporting to the Security Council. The Secretary-General has appointed more women as heads of United Nations missions. While that important agenda is broadly acknowledged, 15 years on there remains a poor understanding of the potential of both integrating a gendered perspective and increasing the participation of women at all levels of political and civil life, most especially at the leadership level.

32. The Panel recognizes the many efforts undertaken by the Secretariat and Member States to strengthen United Nations peace operations over the course of the past 15 years and including numerous innovative initiatives under way today. The Panel's recommendations in the present report seek to build on those efforts.

II. A call for change

33. The Panel's extensive consultations with Member States, regional organizations, civil society, think tanks and the broader United Nations system have reaffirmed the belief that the United Nations has real normative, political and operational strengths that continue to make it an essential global peace and security actor.

34. The United Nations enjoys exceptional reach across the globe to access knowledge and expertise; it can draw upon the financial, human and other resources of its universal membership to assemble and to sustain peace operations in any part of the world. The United Nations has an unmatched convening power and an ability to bring together disparate interests for common purposes, to elevate issues above sometimes paralyzing regional agendas and to identify and implement impartial strategies that can lead to political solutions. The United Nations has the ability to bring together comprehensive approaches, political, security, development and human rights, along with a capacity to sustain those in the field over time.

35. Consultations highlighted that in other ways, however, the United Nations is severely constrained. The universal legitimacy of the United Nations is one of its greatest strengths; yet it is at the heart of the concerns of some Member States that United Nations involvement may result in internationalization of domestic issues. The United Nations is often brought into a conflict late, once other options have already been exhausted. Its prevention and mediation efforts are chronically and severely underresourced. Moreover, the Organization displays systemic weaknesses. Too often, it generates template mandates and missions instead of situation-specific political strategies. Its force generation approach has struggled to get sufficient

forces on the ground quickly enough and relies on underresourced uniformed capabilities with little or no interoperability and weak command and control. Rapidly deployable specialist capacities such as aviation, medical specialists and engineers are difficult to mobilize in advance of infantry units. Secretariat departments and United Nations agencies, funds and programmes have yet to arrive at clear divisions of labour and struggle to integrate their efforts in the face of competing pressures, at times contradictory messages and different funding sources. United Nations bureaucratic systems configured for a headquarters environment limit the speed, mobility and agility of response in the field.

36. The Panel has received clear messages of the imperative for change from Governments and grass-roots organizations from East to West, from the global South to the global North: those challenges must be addressed. The credibility, legitimacy and relevance of the United Nations in the coming years will depend on its ability to leverage its strengths, address its weaknesses and empower others to realize their own potential to maintain and achieve peace and security. The credibility gap that has opened between the ambitious mandates and high expectations of peace operations on the one hand and the challenges on the ground and at times flawed performance of some missions on the other must be addressed. The United Nations should address the weaknesses in its political approaches to protracted conflicts, which continue to inflict suffering on large numbers of people. The United Nations must maintain, and in some cases restore its role as an impartial actor in some regions and conflict zones, which impinge on its capacity to lead political processes and negotiations.

37. The United Nations needs to embrace four essential shifts to position its peace operations to better respond to the challenges of the future:

(a) *Politics must have primacy.* Political solutions should always guide the design and deployment of United Nations peace operations and political momentum must be sustained;

(b) *The full spectrum of peace operations must be used more flexibly to respond to changing needs on the ground.* Peace operations must be employed as a spectrum of tools and adapted to respond to changing situations. Better analysis and strategy, sharper assessment and planning, prioritized mandates and more responsive and field-driven administration should enable that;

(c) *A stronger, more inclusive peace and security partnership for the future must be built.* The United Nations must use its position at the nexus of a partnership with Member States and regional organizations to enable swift and effective responses to crises underpinned by mutual responsibilities and clear comparative advantages. The United Nations system and United Nations peace operations should also embrace partnership, including through more meaningful consultation with partners and troop and police contributors;

(d) *The United Nations Secretariat must become more field-focused and United Nations peace operations must be more people-centred.* There must be an awakening of the United Nations Headquarters in New York to the distinct and important needs of field missions, and a renewed resolve on the part of United Nations peace operations personnel to serve and protect the people they have been mandated to assist.

38. The Panel believes that decisive and far-reaching change is required across four core areas of the work of United Nations peace operations. For each of those, the United Nations needs greater clarity of purpose, realism about limits, commitment to partnerships and a determination to deliver better results.

(a) *Conflict prevention and mediation must be brought back to the fore.* The United Nations has not invested enough on addressing root causes of conflict. It must do that in partnership with others, while strengthening its own capacities to undertake prevention work, including through inclusive and equitable development;

(b) *Protection of civilians is a core obligation of the United Nations, but expectations and capability must converge.* The United Nations must deliver proactively on its commitment to protect civilians. The Organization must reinforce implementation of its protection responsibilities and draw appropriately on all available civilian, military and police capacities;

(c) *The United Nations is providing protection and managing conflict in more hostile environments, and clarity is needed on the use of force.* New operating environments demand much greater clarity on when and how the United Nations and its partners will use force, under what conditions and with what principles;

(d) *To sustain peace, lessons must be learned and new approaches embraced to help prevent relapse into conflict.* The United Nations and its partners must maintain political engagement, promote inclusive social and economic development, overcome systemic gaps and broaden community engagement, with women and youth playing a prominent role.

39. Finally, none of the shifts outlined above can be achieved unless a decisive change is made in empowering United Nations peace operations to deliver more effectively in the field.

(a) *Set a clear direction and forge a common purpose.* That requires the United Nations to set realistic political strategies based on improved analysis, planning and mandating through meaningful and effective consultations with contributors;

(b) *Improve speed, capability and performance of uniformed personnel.* With its partners, the United Nations must overcome constraints to rapid deployment in response to crises. A more strategic approach to force generation must be supported by political efforts. Greater consultation with contributors, innovative approaches to obtaining specialized capabilities and a framework for improving performance are essential;

(c) *Engage with host countries and local communities to ensure mission success.* Engagement should facilitate more inclusive and participatory peace processes. Working closely with local communities enables missions to monitor how the local people experience the impact of peace operations, to ensure the mission does no harm and to design better protection strategies to ensure the mission is more effective in improving the lives of the people it is deployed to serve and protect;

(d) *Put policy into practice.* Despite persuasive rhetoric, the United Nations has yet to address some of the basics by strengthening partnerships; improving leadership by fully integrating women, peace and security and human rights throughout mission life cycles and across mandated tasks; delivering on

commitments to zero tolerance for sexual exploitation and abuse; improving the safety, security and crisis management systems for today's more insecure settings; communicating better both globally and locally; and improving its commitment to environmental impact and its uptake of technology;

(e) *Harness systems, structures and resourcing to support the field and enable change*. United Nations administrative support policies, procedures and authorities must be revised to enable effective field operations to be tailored to each context and deliver timely results. Structures at Headquarters must be reconfigured to support that more field-oriented agenda. The resourcing of field operations should bring a new focus on results that has long eluded the Organization, as well as the resources needed to more reliably launch, sustain and support political efforts in the field.

40. The change required is considerable and will take time. It will require Member States to recommit to shouldering a common burden in support of United Nations peace operations. Collective burden-sharing demands willingness by all to commit their political, human and financial resources to the fullest extent possible.

41. A willingness to reach consensus on the future direction and needs of United Nations peace operations must be restored. That requires a commitment by those who work in the General Assembly and Security Council to go beyond the diplomatic trench lines of the last decade and to find solutions on how best to deal with today's threats and strengthen United Nations peace operations for tomorrow. It will require a spirit of genuine collaboration and inclusion so as to establish a common purpose and resolve. Old and divisive arguments should be replaced by a new commitment to make United Nations peace operations more inclusive, more effective and ultimately more relevant to the needs of Member States and the people suffering in conflict-affected countries.

42. The United Nations Secretariat must embrace the need for yet more change as it looks to the future. The world continues to evolve and so must the United Nations. The United Nations of tomorrow will be judged not by the quality of its conferences or its resolutions, but by the quality of its response when Member States and their people call on it to address the scourge of war that continues to threaten millions of women, men and children in the real world. Peace operations are, for many, the United Nations. Therefore, our responsibility is to continuously better them for the good of the peoples they serve.

A. Essential shifts for peace operations

1. Primacy of politics

43. Lasting peace is not achieved nor sustained by military and technical engagements, but through political solutions. The primacy of politics should be the hallmark of the approach of the United Nations to the resolution of conflict, during mediation, the monitoring of ceasefires, assistance to the implementation of peace accords, the management of violent conflicts and longer-term efforts at sustaining peace.

44. The United Nations must be committed to open and impartial dialogue with all parties, States and non-state actors. In situations of armed conflict, it must explore every avenue to find alternatives to violence, minimize the suffering of civilians and

promote respect by all actors for the human rights of the local people and the combatants themselves, irrespective of their political, ethnic, religious or military affiliation.

45. In some contexts, the United Nations today struggles to make effective use of its political, military and other tools to help manage conflict where political processes are not yet under way or have not concluded and where regional tensions are sometimes still a factor. In such situations, the Panel believes that no effort should be spared to bring violence to an end through political means. The United Nations should strive to bridge differences between parties to the conflicts, craft solutions respectful of their legitimate interests and grievances and those of society at large and seek to bring about lasting settlements and national reconciliation.

46. United Nations peace operations must be deployed as part of a viable process aimed at such settlements. They must be conceived and planned in support of political solutions in order to respond to evolving conditions on the ground. Political strategies that underpin peace operations should enjoy the support of a united Security Council, regional entities and others vested in ending the conflict.

47. Whenever the United Nations has a peace operation on the ground, it should lead or play a leading role in political efforts prior to and during peace processes and after agreements are reached. Absent a major role in supporting a peace process, the success of a United Nations mission may be undermined. In any situation in which a United Nations peace operation is involved, the Secretary-General should designate a mediator, who may be his or her special representative or special envoy, empowered to lead or play a leading role in peace negotiations. When working with regional organizations, as is likely to be increasingly the case in the future, unity of vision, approach and message is important. In such situations, a joint representative could be considered and, in all cases, the United Nations envoy and his or her regional counterparts must collaborate closely.

48. Ultimately, political primacy rests with national actors. The United Nations and other international actors can only support and facilitate a national commitment to peace. The main effort of any peace operation must be to focus international attention, leverage and resources on supporting national actors to make the courageous choices required to restore peace, address underlying conflict drivers and meet the legitimate interests of the wider population, not just a small elite.

2. Spectrum of peace operations

49. The United Nations must improve its capacity to deploy appropriate and effective operational responses to support and sustain political efforts. Despite the diversity of operational tools developed by the United Nations over the past six decades, those tools have not been used with sufficient flexibility. Disputes about bureaucratic boundaries, the limits of budgets and definitional debates have slowly eclipsed the true purpose of the enterprise: to provide the most relevant and appropriately configured peace operations to help prevent and resolve armed conflicts and sustain peace.

50. The United Nations must deliver more flexibly tailored "right fit" and not "template" missions. Terms such as "special political missions" and "peacekeeping operations" are ingrained in mindsets and the bureaucracy of the United Nations, but should not constrain the Organization's ability to respond more flexibly to the needs

on the ground. The Panel believes that the Secretary-General and Member States should embrace the terminology of "United Nations peace operations" to denote the full spectrum of United Nations peace and security missions and initiatives outlined above, as well as more flexible tools and instruments, such as the use of small teams of experts and peace and development advisers deployed jointly by the United Nations Development Programme and the Department of Political Affairs to support national Governments and United Nations country teams.

51. By making flexible use of its broad spectrum of tools, the United Nations can determine which approach is best tailored to the conflict and the political strategy. The United Nations peace operations presence should change over time, and context-specific analysis should drive strategy formulation, planning and mandating. That approach must embrace a more nuanced analysis of the complex drivers of the conflict and facilitate smoother transitioning between different United Nations configurations in the field, including transition from and to United Nations country teams. New tools should be considered according to the context on the ground, including lighter missions that are less costly and more readily deployable than heavier mission templates.

52. Many conflicts have transnational root causes and effects. Analysis, strategy formulation, planning and mandating missions should explicitly integrate a regional dimension in addressing conflict dynamics and develop regional as well as national political strategies in response. That will require increased collaboration between neighbouring United Nations missions and increased use of regional envoys, regional offices and possibly other regional peace operations.

3. Global and regional partnership for peace and security

53. The Panel fully endorses the Secretary-General's recent statement that "we have entered an era of partnership peacekeeping" (see S/2015/229). It is true of all aspects of the international peace and security agenda. With a new conviction, the United Nations and regional organizations must mobilize their comparative advantages in responding to emerging crises while sustaining support to long-running ones. A bold new agenda is required to build a strong global-regional framework to meet those challenges through responsible and principled strategic partnerships.

54. The United Nations today sits at the nexus of a loose web of international, regional and national capacities for preventing and managing conflict and sustaining peace. For each crisis, a hasty and ad hoc response is assembled. For a volatile future, the Security Council should be able to rely upon a more resilient framework for swift and effective international response in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. That will require vision, long-term commitment and resources to bind together the capacities of the United Nations and regional organizations and national response capacities. The Secretary-General should build support for such a vision, the Security Council should reach out to the governing bodies of regional organizations and Member States should address resourcing and other constraints that may hold back efforts to build a stronger global-regional peace and security framework for the future, particularly with respect to standby arrangements.

55. Regional and subregional organizations are becoming more prominent features in the global peace and security landscape, as had been foreseen in the drafting of Chapter VIII of the Charter 70 years ago. Regional and subregional entities bring

long-standing relationships, depth of understanding and determination and often a willingness to respond. However, they also bring interests, some of which carry potential risks to managing conflict impartially. Navigating the regional dimensions of conflict and collaboration with regional partners will be an essential aspect of planning and deploying all United Nations peace operations in the future.

56. In a future of greater global and regional partnership, the United Nations should embrace dual roles as one partner responding politically and operationally alongside others and as an enabler and facilitator of others to play their increasingly prominent roles.

57. The African Union and its subregional partners, in particular, have become increasingly operational. Whether in preventing conflict or responding to it, the regional partnerships of the United Nations in Africa must be intensified and made more predictable through mechanisms for collaboration and by optimizing the use of limited resources. The United Nations and the African Union must strive for common approaches through shared assessments, sound consultative mechanisms for decision-making and tools for collaborative planning and operations across the conflict cycle. It is a partnership that should be made deeper and more collaborative. The United Nations should take the decisive step to invest in and commit to the success of the African Union as a partner in addressing shared concerns.

58. Finally, there is the partnership within. The United Nations needs to find new and creative ways to leverage the comparative advantages of the whole system to deliver better results in an integrated manner. United Nations peace operations are themselves political partnerships that express the political will and resources of the international community to respond to a crisis. Peace operations are an expression of different interests and concerns: those of the Security Council, of regional neighbours and, in the case of peacekeeping missions, of troop- and police-contributing countries. The Security Council, troop- and police- contributing countries and the Secretariat must embark together with a shared understanding of the situation, a common political goal and clarity on the level of resolve and resources required to help deliver and sustain a political solution. Common purpose and resolve must be continuously shored up through meaningful and inclusive consultation throughout the life of the mission.

4. More field-focused United Nations Secretariat and more people-centred United Nations peace operations

59. The United Nations Secretariat currently supports peace operations in the field with approximately 106,000 uniformed personnel, as well as nearly 22,000 civilian personnel who make up more than 55 per cent of all Secretariat civilian staff. The budgets of peace operations are four times larger than that of the rest of the Secretariat combined. United Nations peace operations are the most visible and high-risk aspect of the work of the Secretariat and they are undertaken in some of the world's most difficult locations to operate and live in. The failure of peace operations can cost many lives and the Organization's reputation in the public eye hinges on its ability to help end wars and sustain peace. And yet, the United Nations Secretariat is not yet a field-focused or field-enabling entity. United Nations Headquarters must make a decisive shift in its administrative practices and mindset to focus on ways to make United Nations field operations faster, more effective and

more efficient and to ensure that they deliver results within the Organization's rules and regulations.

60. An equally important shift in mindset is required by those who serve in United Nations peace operations. The United Nations greatest strength lies in the principles of the Charter, which should not be squandered by failing to act impartially. Whether civilian or in uniform, whether national staff or international staff, United Nations personnel must be at once committed to the purposes and principles of the United Nations and be committed to helping to improve the lives of people living in conflict-affected countries whom they have been mandated to serve. That demands that United Nations personnel in the field engage with and relate to the people and communities they are asked to support. The legacy of the "white-SUV culture" must give way to a more human face that prioritizes closer interaction with local people to better understand their concerns, needs and aspirations.

61. **The Panel recommends that four essential shifts should underpin changes in mindset and action to define United Nations peace operations for the future:**

(a) **United Nations peace operations should be deployed as part of a broader strategy in support of a political process. Whenever a peace operation is deployed, the United Nations should lead or play a leading role in the political process;**

(b) **United Nations peace operations must be responsive to the situation on the ground and must transition its presence more seamlessly. The Organization should embrace "United Nations peace operations" as a single spectrum of peace and security missions and other initiatives, and must better integrate its efforts to deliver that;**

(c) **The United Nations should forge a vision for a stronger global and regional partnership for peace and security, with the United Nations as a standard-bearer for impartial political solutions, serving as an enabler of others. The framework for partnership should include modalities for capacity enhancement and burden-sharing, as well as mechanisms for monitoring and accountability;**

(d) **The United Nations must become a more field-oriented and people-centred organization in its peace operations. That requires modernized approaches and structures to enable flexible and better United Nations system responses in the field. It requires greater engagement with communities to help improve mandate implementation.**

B. Preventing conflict and mediating peace

62. The avoidance of war rather than its resolution should be at the centre of national, regional and international effort and investment. We know that conflict prevention saves lives and averts social, economic and physical devastation. As the Panel heard in its consultations across four continents, there is an unassailable logic in investing early and adequately to prevent the onset of an armed conflict. Such investment would prevent the need for much larger investments in the ambulances and triage at the bottom of the cliff after many thousands of lives, even hundreds of thousands of lives, have been lost and billions of dollars spent on, and lost to, war.

63. Yet efforts aimed at conflict prevention struggle to galvanize the necessary political urgency for action; they also remain the poor relative of better-resourced peace operations deployed during and after armed conflict. When prevention does not succeed, the tools designed to respond to crises and address armed conflict, in particular humanitarian efforts and the United Nations peace operations machinery, are overstretched and under immense strain.

64. At the 2005 World Summit, and on many other occasions, Member States have stressed the need for a "culture of prevention". That culture has yet to materialize: recommendations and resolutions have largely gone unimplemented. Expectations raised at the time of the creation of the Peacebuilding Commission that its focus would encompass prevention have not been met.

65. The prevention of armed conflict has eluded genuine collective action. In contrast to mediation and peacekeeping, where decades of international experience have delivered a number of core lessons and basic principles, the prevention of armed conflicts is approached in an ad hoc manner with many disparate and disconnected perspectives: diplomatic, political, developmental and economic, among others. Those experiences have not been leveraged in support of a sustained international effort to prevent conflict. Put simply, the international community is failing at preventing conflict.

Building a collective commitment to make prevention work

66. There is growing interest in a collective effort to prevent conflict or act early to resolve it. Steadily increasing membership of the Group of Friends of Mediation at the United Nations testifies to that interest. Many regional organizations have established early warning mechanisms and adopted a more active approach towards working with the United Nations and with one another in that area. There is a growing convergence of views across regions about the political, economic, social, cultural and environmental drivers of conflict. A number of countries recently emerging from conflict have established local and national mechanisms for the prevention of violent conflict, including by calling upon social, religious and community leaders to preserve social cohesion.

67. The Panel encourages the Secretary-General to call for a new commitment to preventing conflict in the twenty-first century. To succeed, such an effort must go beyond the United Nations and its Member States. Together with regional organizations and existing groupings of Member States such as the Group of Twenty[6] and the Group of Seven Plus,[7] the United Nations should build a broad-based coalition, an international prevention forum, to identify and mobilize innovative approaches and capacities for preventing emerging conflicts. The

[6] The membership of the Group of Twenty comprises a mix of the world's largest advanced and emerging economies, representing about two thirds of the world's population, 85 per cent of global gross domestic product and over 75 per cent of global trade. The members of the Group of Twenty are Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Mexico, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and the European Union (see https://g20.org).

[7] The membership of the Group of Seven Plus comprises 18 conflict-affected States: Afghanistan, Burundi, the Central African Republic, Chad, the Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Liberia, Papua New Guinea, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Somalia, Togo and Yemen (see www.g7plus.org).

coalition should draw deeply on the capacities and differing experiences of Governments; civil society, in particular youth and women, religious and other community leaders; and the global business community to build future capacities to better prevent the scourge of war. It should harness their strengths in using new approaches to mobilize resources and commitment, including through the use of new media.

Strengthening United Nations conflict prevention and mediation efforts

68. Since the earliest days of the United Nations, "good offices" of the Secretary-General have been a core element in preventing and resolving conflicts through preventive diplomacy. The effort has noticeably intensified and expanded during the last decade and a half. Successive Secretaries-General, their envoys and senior Secretariat officials have attempted to mediate virtually every major armed conflict on the United Nations agenda and have sought to prevent potential conflict from escalating.

69. A particularly effective innovation in recent years has been the establishment of United Nations regional political offices, which serve as forward platforms for preventive diplomacy and mediation. Regional offices have played a credible though discreet facilitating role in addressing emerging or incipient conflict. Through close and continuous collaboration with regional Member States and regional and subregional organizations, they have proven their ability to address transnational and regional grievances driving conflict and to help develop potential solutions. Building on the experiences of regional offices in West Africa, Central Africa and Central Asia, the Secretary-General should work with Member States to establish additional regional offices. An office in the North Africa and West Asia region would be a priority in the light of the interrelated and transnational drivers of conflict affecting that region. Another positive development in recent years has been the increased cooperation between United Nations mediators and their counterparts in regions around the world. The Mediation Support Unit, including its staff and standby capacities, have been an effective instrument to provide mediation-related political and technical support where needed, and to share best practices and relevant knowledge to improve the mediation capabilities of others.

70. Much of the work of the United Nations in preventive diplomacy must be carried out discreetly and, if successful, the credit given to others, particularly when working with the parties and the region during the early sensitive period of forestalling armed conflict. The imperative to operate quietly has contributed to a lack of understanding of the breadth of the work of the Secretary-General, his or her special envoys and other senior officials and the collective United Nations efforts to promote peace and prevent war. It has also contributed to the chronic severe underresourcing of prevention activities. Currently, the Secretariat needs to engage simultaneously in the monitoring and analysis of emerging and ongoing crises while backstopping an increasing number of political missions that lack access to their own dedicated backstopping arrangements.

71. The Panel believes that it is unacceptable that core functions in support of prevention and mediation in the Mediation Support Unit, as well as tools such as the Standby Team of Mediation Experts, which is wholly funded through voluntary contributions from a few donors, lack predictable funding. In fact, voluntary funding accounts for a significant share of the resources of the Department of Political

Affairs of the Secretariat that finance some of those core functions. In 2014, more than 30 per cent of the Department's total resources at Headquarters came from voluntary funding. The core United Nations functions in support of prevention and mediation, such as monitoring and analysis, support to the Secretary-General's "good offices" and mediation support, must be funded under the regular budget. In the past decade, the political department has provided electoral assistance to 40 elections supported by nine peacekeeping missions. Over the past five years, the Department has also provided mediation assistance to five peacekeeping missions. Electoral and mediation-related support for countries hosting United Nations peacekeeping missions also lack predictable funding, as the Department does not have access to the peacekeeping support account to backstop those activities.

Early engagement

72. Despite its authority under Article 34 of the Charter[8] to become involved at an early stage of a dispute, the Security Council has infrequently engaged in emerging conflicts. Instead, the Security Council has focused on dealing with armed conflicts and emergencies after they occur, leaving United Nations efforts at preventive diplomacy to the Secretariat in coordination with others. The Panel believes that the Security Council should increase its monitoring of emerging issues and expand its dialogue with the Secretariat on how best to support prevention and mediation efforts. Earlier Security Council engagement, including interactive dialogues in informal formats and visits to turbulent areas, would be important in addressing emerging threats. Regionally focused formats, such as the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Security Council on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, should be revitalized and reinforced. The Security Council and the Secretary-General should consult closely with regional stakeholders in understanding and preventing potential disputes and in crafting an early response in partnership with others.

73. The Secretariat's "horizon scanning" informal briefings[9] to the Security Council had been an important tool to apprise it of emerging crises. However, those briefings were not universally welcomed owing in part to political sensitivities of some Member States. Such sensitivities and resistance to earlier United Nations engagement must not deter the Secretary-General from bringing early analysis and frank advice to the Security Council on matters that may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security, as provided for in Article 99 of the Charter.[10]

Working with and supporting others

74. Prevention is first and foremost a national responsibility. Many countries and regions have developed capacities to deal with conflicts, including at the grass-roots and community levels. Inclusive and equitable development practices have an

[8] Article 34 of the Charter of the United Nations provides: "The Security Council may investigate any dispute, or any situation which might lead to international friction or give rise to a dispute, in order to determine whether the continuance of the dispute or situation is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security."

[9] The Under-Secretary-General of the Department of Political Affairs of the Secretariat would informally apprise the Security Council of matters related to peace and security and those that could potentially affect the agenda of the Security Council.

[10] Article 99 of the Charter of the United Nations provides: "The Secretary-General may bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter which in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security."

important role in prevention efforts, and in many cases national actors work with international development partners, including the United Nations country team, to pursue inclusive national development plans. With their long-term presence on the ground, the country teams should be well placed to observe deteriorating conditions that may lead to violent conflict and to support an early response that, in the best case, can prevent conflict or at least slow the deterioration while other options are launched.

75. It is clear that United Nations country team leadership should have adequate conflict prevention-related skills, experience and capacity, and be effectively and coherently supported by Headquarters whenever required. At the request of relevant Governments, the Secretary-General has helped reinforce national conflict prevention and mediation efforts, including through low-profile political engagement and the use of mediation experts and peace and development advisers, among others, to assist concerned Member States in preventing the escalation of an incipient crisis. The increasing deployment of peace and development advisers as part of United Nations country teams is another encouraging trend in terms of helping Member States meet some of their conflict-prevention challenges, which should be further reinforced.

76. The United Nations should complement its existing range of tools with the ability to deploy small teams to help national Governments and United Nations country teams address emerging conflict situations, building on the successful use of peace and development advisers, and as envisaged by the Human Rights Up Front proposal for "light teams". The teams would deploy upon the consent of the host Government and under the authority of the Secretary-General. They should include personnel with expertise tailored to meet the needs identified. Similar teams could smooth the transition from a United Nations mission back to the United Nations country team. As a core responsibility of the United Nations to provide political support and engagement to help Governments, its assistance should be supported through reliable assessed funding under the regular budget.

77. The Panel acknowledges the efforts to promote and protect human rights as a means for conflict prevention and the prevention of relapse. Considerable technical cooperation has been provided by the Secretariat to develop national capacities to prevent human rights violations, as well as to strengthen the capacities of civil society and communities to carry out early warning and response. The Panel firmly supports the Secretary-General's Human Rights Up Front action plan, including strengthening prevention and ensuring that the United Nations takes the best possible actions to protect people during conflict. The initiative calls upon the entire United Nations system, including the Secretariat, agencies, funds and programmes, to work closely together to identify early indicators of potential conflict, to adopt a common analysis and strategy, to ensure that Headquarters and the field are aligned to prioritize human rights concerns in political prevention and good offices and then to act on United Nations responsibilities. And it focuses on ensuring that the United Nations assigns or deploys the right staffing capacities, and that senior staff are held accountable in delivering a response.

78. In recent years, regional organizations and non-governmental organizations have increased their mediation efforts and prevention capacities. Those partners provide important options for the parties to a conflict to turn to in search of mediated settlements and negotiations. In a multi-actor environment, the United

Nations should play an important role in promoting and sharing good practices in support of negotiation and mediation by others. The strength of the United Nations in mediation derives from its long and diverse experience, its impartiality, its universal membership and its access to a breadth of expertise. Such support should be available to negotiators and mediators irrespective of which organization has fielded them, including to national and regional mediation efforts. The Secretariat's resources for mediation support, including standby mediation support capacity with its specialized expertise, should be substantially increased and fully funded under the regular budget.

79. United Nations mediators should work with relevant actors in the country and regions concerned, including community and religious leaders and civil society representing women, youth and others. The United Nations should champion the inclusion of women in mediation processes. Special envoys and special representatives of the Secretary-General should ensure consistent and systematic consultation with women leaders and those from diverse sectors of society in order to understand and incorporate their perspectives and garner their potential contribution in the political process. They should ensure that the views expressed by women are adequately taken into account in their own political strategies and impress upon the parties the importance of participation by women in their delegations. They should spur capacity development programmes for women, where required, so that women can credibly participate in peace negotiations and decision-making processes. They should encourage parties to the conflict to include specific issues relating to the participation of women in conflict mitigation and prevention, recovery and reconciliation, as well as protection measures, in peace agreements.

80. The emergence and spread of violent extremism is adding to the already complex threats faced by States, societies, communities and United Nations peace operations, including its mediators. Many of those violent extremist groups have grown by exploiting local grievances and other governance deficits. The existence of some of those actors poses a challenge to the United Nations and its Member States and specifically to the belief that it is always possible to find common ground with an armed group. It is therefore important to strengthen and leverage the United Nations system's broad conflict-prevention potential, including the Secretary-General's upcoming plan of action to prevent violent extremism to help Member States and communities affected by that phenomenon. The need to counter violent extremism necessitates that the United Nations reinforce its collaboration with many national and international civil society organizations, in particular faith-based organizations doing effective work in that difficult area.

81. **With respect to preventing conflict and mediating peace, the Panel recommends that:**

(a) **The Secretary-General convene an international forum on prevention that would periodically bring together Governments, regional organizations, civil society and the global business community to exchange conflict-prevention experiences and agree on innovative approaches that integrate conflict prevention, governance, development and human rights;**

(b) **The Security Council engage earlier to address emerging threats, including in partnership with regional and subregional organizations, and be open to early analysis and frank advice from the Secretary-General on situations that may threaten international peace and security. The Secretary-General**

should bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter which in her or his opinion may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security;

(c) United Nations Secretariat prevention and mediation efforts be reinforced through:

(i) A significant strengthening of and more reliable resourcing through the regular budget for the Secretariat's core prevention and mediation capacities, including monitoring and analysis, support to the Secretary-General's good offices and mediation support, including the standby mediation team and the deployment of peace and development advisers and small multidisciplinary teams of experts to support the United Nations country team when needed;

(ii) Access to the peacekeeping support account for mediation and electoral support to peacekeeping operations;

(iii) The establishment of additional regional offices, with an office in the North Africa and West Asia region as a priority;

(d) The Secretary-General convene the members of the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination and the principal leaders of the key Secretariat departments and offices to agree on concerted efforts to better prevent conflict by ensuring that:

(i) United Nations agencies, funds and programmes advocate for and prioritize inclusive and equitable development activities as an essential contribution to conflict prevention;

(ii) United Nations country teams have the skills, experience and capacity to support conflict prevention efforts;

(iii) The entire United Nations system commits to the full implementation of the Human Rights Up Front initiative, including its cultural, operational and political engagement elements designed to support conflict prevention, and to ensure that the United Nations has the requisite staff and capacities and a common strategy in place.

C. Protecting civilians

82. The protection of civilians in armed conflict is a core principle of international humanitarian law and a moral responsibility for the United Nations. Across the world, civilians under threat look to the United Nations for assistance and protection. At times, the international community has responded and saved many lives and yet, in other cases, systemic constraints, including a lack of consensus among Security Council members or sovereignty concerns, prevent the United Nations from acting earlier and more effectively in response. The Panel recognizes the desperate protection needs of civilians in many conflicts today where prevention has failed and no effective international response has been mounted. The Panel calls for every effort to be made by the international community to respond to their plight.

83. The remit of the Panel, however, is limited to the protection of civilians through the limited but critical tool of United Nations peace operations. Wherever United Nations peace operations are deployed with a protection of civilians

mandate, they must do everything in their power to protect civilians under threat. Today, United Nations peace operations are helping to protect thousands of civilians on a daily basis through the monitoring and advocacy of human rights, by supporting the development of the rule of law and through political engagement with the conflict parties, as well as through physical presence, deterrence and protective action. Yet the pronounced international failures to protect civilians during the 1990s, particularly in Rwanda and Srebrenica, Bosnia and Herzegovina, still loom large over the United Nations and its peace operations today. The spectre of those experiences must continue to drive the Organization to spare no effort to protect those it is mandated to protect.

84. Over the past two decades, concerted efforts have been made to strengthen international protection frameworks. Those include the increasing prominence of human rights and protection-related mandates for United Nations peace operations, the responsibility to protect, as set out in General Assembly resolution 60/1 on the 2005 World Summit Outcome, and most recently the Human Rights Up Front initiative of the Secretary-General. In addition to the mandate of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, mechanisms of the Human Rights Council and the human rights treaty bodies, the Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide and the Office of the Special Adviser on the Responsibility to Protect, mandatory monitoring and reporting arrangements have been set out in General Assembly and Security Council resolutions on children in armed conflict and sexual violence in conflict. Policies, guidance and training have been developed on ways to implement human rights and protection-related mandates. Many United Nations peace operations now include protection of civilians advisers, child protection officers and women's protection advisers working alongside the mission's human rights component. But that growth in concepts, standards, advocacy and specialized personnel has yet to transform reality on the ground, where it matters.

85. The primary responsibility for the protection of civilians lies with their Governments. The Security Council and other international partners should seek to include that responsibility of the host Government clearly in a United Nations compact between the Secretariat and the host Government, proposed in paragraph 151, and hold host Governments to account for the protection of civilians. The presence of a United Nations mission or other protection actors does not diminish the obligation of host Governments to make every effort to protect their own civilians. But neither does that State responsibility dilute the obligation of United Nations missions to act within their capabilities when the host Government is not willing or able to protect its citizens.

1. Unarmed strategies

86. Unarmed strategies must be at the forefront of United Nations efforts to protect civilians. United Nations peace operations, as political instruments, can most effectively protect civilians by helping to bring an end to violent conflicts, shoring up the confidence of parties in peaceful solutions and working to advance peace processes. Similarly, missions can influence the actions of belligerents and limit civilian casualties by providing advice and support to host authorities and ensuring effective and credible reporting. The senior leadership of peace operations have a particular responsibility to use their political influence and advocacy to protect

civilians and should be fully supported by the Secretary-General and the Security Council.

87. Human rights monitoring, investigating and reporting by human rights officers and child and women protection advisers, and advocacy efforts, especially by senior mission leadership, contribute to ensuring greater accountability for and prevention of human rights violations. Failure to address those violations contributes to a climate of impunity, which further endangers civilians. Civil affairs officers, police experts and others work at the local, provincial and national levels to reach out to State authorities, non-state armed groups and communities to map and, where possible, mediate local conflicts.

88. Missions assist host Government authorities and communities to improve the protective environment for civilians. Many host States seek and require assistance over a long period to build the capacity to more effectively protect their populations. Missions, together with other partners, are often mandated to assist them in such efforts, particularly in the areas of rule of law, policing and human rights and in working with host State armed forces as mandated. In those situations, United Nations peace operations must ensure that they consistently apply the human rights due diligence policy on United Nations support to non-United Nations security forces.

89. Humanitarian organizations play essential roles in protecting civilians. Where appropriate, timely coordination between missions with humanitarian actors is indispensable in pursuing unarmed strategies, as those partners often work closely with communities, especially internally displaced persons. Many non-governmental organizations, national and international, also ensure protection by their civilian presence and commitment to non-violent strategies for protection. Missions should make every effort to harness or leverage the non-violent practices and capabilities of local communities and non-governmental organizations to support the creation of a protective environment.

2. Responding to imminent threat

90. When unarmed strategies fail, however, and civilians are under imminent threat, peacekeeping operations with a mandate and capacity to use force have the obligation to protect civilians from armed attack wherever they are deployed. More than 98 per cent of military and police personnel deployed in United Nations peacekeeping missions today have a mandate to protect civilians, as part of integrated mission-wide efforts.

91. Some missions have been successful in saving civilian lives through decisive action to contain spreading violence or looting, to provide a haven to civilians fleeing violence, to deter perpetrators and, in exceptional cases, to support operations against armed groups. Indeed, through their presence alone missions contribute to the protection of thousands of civilians every day. However, more missions are being deployed into increasingly demanding environments; they are struggling to fulfil their protection obligations and to close a widening gap between what is asked of them and what they can provide. In the worst circumstances, missions with mandates to protect civilians struggle simply to protect and resupply themselves. In some instances, missions have failed, for a variety of reasons, to respond to calls for assistance, leading to perceptions from nearby communities that although the United Nations is present on the ground, it is not present for them.

92. In the face of imminent threats to civilians, there must be no tolerance for national constraints and the failure to follow orders. When civilians are at risk, delay and inaction can mean the difference between life and death. The United Nations must not stand by as civilians are threatened or killed: missions must demonstrate the determination to use every tool available to protect civilians under imminent threat. Each and every peacekeeper — military, police and civilian — must be willing and able to pass that test. Planners in the Secretariat and decision makers in the Security Council and in contributing country capitals all bear responsibility to undertake the necessary assessment and planning and provide the required resources to support individuals and units in the field when that crisis comes.

93. Closing the gap between what is asked of missions to protect civilians and what they can provide requires improvements across several dimensions: assessment and planning, capabilities, timely information and two-way communication, leadership and training, and mandates and expectations.

Assessment and planning

94. Assessments of threats to civilians must drive capability requirements and planning. Threat assessments must look at, among other aspects, typologies of armed forces, actors and groups; forms of violence, types of threats and scenarios for potential threats against civilians over time, including the risk of mass atrocities; and local sources of resilience and self-protection. Such assessments will also be informed by the mandate, situation, climate and terrain. Planners must ensure that a mission's protection efforts are tailored to the context, including the necessary capabilities, and build upon existing sources of resilience and local protection. The Secretariat should always present the Security Council with clear options and recommendations based on frank assessments of the situation and required capabilities.

Capabilities

95. Member States must provide the mission with adequate capabilities to implement the mandate and the Security Council should support the Secretary-General in obtaining them. Physical protection by armed peacekeepers requires adequate infantry and enhanced mobility assets. Many missions, however, lack enough of both across large areas of operations. Whereas some deficiencies in infantry can be addressed by high-mobility vehicles and helicopters, the reality is that many missions with protection responsibilities are currently severely underresourced: some lack critical enablers, while others operate under rules that prevent the full use of those capabilities or the troops operate from static "hard wall" encampments that limit their capacity to redeploy quickly. Those constraints are addressed in section III.B, Improving speed, capability and performance for uniformed personnel. In addition, new missions or those requiring urgent reinforcements often wait months for capabilities to arrive, demonstrating all too clearly the need for United Nations and non-United Nations rapid deployment capabilities as also discussed in the aforementioned part.

96. Member States must be serious about the capabilities provided to deliver on protection of civilians mandates. They must not be budget-driven. The Secretariat must be frank in its assessments and not bow to concerns about what the market can bear but provide options regarding what can be achieved with varying levels of

resources. As the Brahimi Report argued, "By self-censoring in that manner, the Secretariat sets up itself and the mission not just to fail but to be the scapegoat for failure"

97. Where the deployment of essential capabilities, including mobility assets, is delayed, missions must escalate to the highest decision-making levels any persistent delays or shortfalls. Where resources do not materialize, deployment plans, concepts of operations and communication strategies should be revised, and the Secretariat must advise the Security Council promptly on the anticipated effects on mandate implementation, including recommendations on adjusting the mandate accordingly.

Information and two-way communication

98. To ensure their capabilities are used to maximum effect, missions need timely, reliable and actionable information on threats to civilians and the analytical tools to use it. The best information often comes from communities themselves. To use that information, missions must build relationships of trust with local people, leading to more effective delivery of protection of civilians mandates and better protection for peacekeepers. Improved two-way communication strategies with communities are essential in order to understand their needs, to convey the limits of United Nations capabilities and, in crisis, to provide information to both the civilian population and responders.

99. Missions should communicate continuously with host authorities on all threats to civilians, in all dimensions, including child protection, sexual violence and the full range of protection issues facing women and girls, as well as men and boys. Most importantly, the Secretariat should keep the Security Council informed in a timely manner of new threats and limits imposed on the mission's ability to act at every stage of the operation. In turn, the Security Council must draw upon its individual and collective influence on and leverage with the conflict parties to ensure that they refrain from targeting civilians directly or indirectly, and swiftly condemn and take steps to bring to justice those who commit or condone such crimes. Robust political engagement by those who have leverage with antagonists in the field can be faster and more decisive than the manoeuvring of military units to meet threats. What works most effectively is the fusion of political leverage with rapid response on the ground.

Leadership and training

100. The commitment of mission leadership, an effective chain of command and the readiness of mission personnel to perform in the face of threats to civilians will ultimately define the effectiveness of any protection response. A determined, proactive posture, both politically and operationally, must be driven from the top by mission leadership as well as by the Secretariat. Uniformed peacekeepers must have a common mindset and commitment to deliver on an agreed operational concept and understand the intent of the force commander to protect civilians. Any failure to act to protect civilians must be thoroughly investigated and reviewed by the Secretariat.

101. Effective training is essential. Military forces are primarily trained to fight an enemy directly; in protection operations, however, understanding how and why perpetrators attack civilians is critical to identifying the proper response. The Secretariat has developed much-needed guidance and scenario-based training

materials on the protection of civilians but lacks a mechanism to confirm that the training has been effectively delivered to all deploying military personnel.

3. Mandates and expectations

102. Protection mandates must be linked explicitly to political solutions. To do otherwise denies the mission a viable exit strategy and provides only palliative protection for civilians. Absent a serious political strategy for resolving the armed conflict that gave rise to the threats to civilians in the first place, a mandate focused exclusively or even predominantly on the protection of civilians is likely to lead to a long, drawn-out and ultimately unwinnable campaign.

103. It is an unfortunate reality that no amount of training and good leadership, or troops and helicopters, will ensure the protection of all civilians across the 11 million square kilometres that 106,000 uniformed United Nations peacekeepers are today asked to operate in. In that context, the Panel reiterates the concern expressed by the Brahimi Report about the expectations associated with protection mandates: "The Panel is concerned about the credibility and achievability of a blanket mandate in this area. There are hundreds of thousands of civilians in current United Nations mission areas who are exposed to potential risks of violence, and United Nations forces currently deployed could not protect more than a small fraction of them even if directed to do so." Missions must do, and be seen to do, their utmost within their capabilities. Yet, even with best efforts, no mission can protect all civilians at all times. In the light of that fact, expectations concerning the mission's ability to protect civilians are, while understandable, often unrealistic. Missions and host Governments should communicate frequently and honestly with the host population to manage any unrealistic expectations with regard to the mandate. The Security Council has a major responsibility to ensure that expectations are realistic.

104. It is not an acceptable option for the Security Council to simply stand by when armed conflict escalates and puts civilian populations at risk of mass atrocities. The international community, through the Security Council, must be able to muster swift and capable responses for those situations where a United Nations peacekeeping operation is not likely to succeed. Accordingly, efforts must be intensified towards political solutions while building a more resilient and reliable system of robust, fast-deploying first-responder capabilities for the future, drawing upon national and regionally based standing capabilities as discussed further in paragraphs 195-205. As part of that effort, it will be important to clarify when and under what conditions non-United Nations forces should be deployed under a Security Council mandate, and to establish requirements for clear accountability and reporting to the Council.

105. **With respect to protecting civilians, the Panel recommends that:**

(a) **In view of the positive contributions of unarmed civilian protection actors, missions work more closely with local communities and national and international non-governmental organizations in building a protective environment;**

(b) **For missions with mandates to protect civilians, the Secretariat:**

(i) **Present to the Security Council a frank and clear assessment as well as informed options accompanied by clear resource requirements;**

(ii) **Following initial deployment, where resources and capabilities do not match the mandate, advise the Security Council that the mandate should be adjusted accordingly;**

(iii) **With troop- and police-contributing countries, ensure that all personnel deployed are trained, equipped and commanded so as to be able to deliver on their responsibilities to protect civilians;**

(iv) **Advise the Security Council of obstacles to fulfilling the mandate, including if troops are not deployed in a timely manner, or are not provided with the required capabilities, and request political and other support from Member States in response;**

(v) **Regularly update the initial assessment and present to the Security Council necessary changes to plans, mandates and resources;**

(c) **Any national caveats beyond the national restrictions expressly accepted by the Secretariat at the outset be treated as disobedience of lawful command;**

(d) **When the Security Council authorizes non-United Nations forces, it establish requirements for reporting and accountability to the Council.**

D. Use of force for peace and protection

Challenges

106. United Nations peacekeepers are often mandated to help maintain a secure environment, to deter the resumption of violence and to provide a secure space for the advancement of the political process, in addition to their role in protecting civilians. Those efforts have historically been undertaken in support of a political commitment to a peace agreement or ceasefire. In those situations, United Nations peacekeeping has been an effective and highly cost-effective tool to build confidence, sustain peace and provide protection.

107. The past decade has shown that the difficulties of mandate implementation increase exponentially when there is little or no peace to keep. Greater military capability can help, but the root of the problem, the absence of a commitment to peace, will vex the best efforts of peacekeepers. Political solutions, not military force, are the true force multipliers in such situations, and are essential to the overall peace effort.

108. Today, the United Nations finds itself in more difficult operating environments. The scale of visible human suffering coupled with the expanding norms of protection creates pressure on countries to "do something". Yet, for many crises in the world, those with the greatest capability may have limited interest in deploying a sustained military presence on the ground, and others with the will to act may lack the resources to sustain their efforts. As a result, the international community has looked to deploy United Nations peacekeeping operations in the midst of conflict as a crisis response tool to deter escalation, to contain conflict while protecting civilians and, at the same time, to attempt to restart or revive peace processes.

Contexts old and new

109. In a number of contemporary missions, United Nations peacekeeping has moved far beyond a clear peace to keep. However, the challenges and implications of the new operating environment have not yet been well-defined or internalized. To begin to clarify the dilemmas faced in today's hostile environments, the Panel sees several distinct developments that are shaping how the use of force must be understood, and at times used, by different types of missions that have been collectively referred to as United Nations peacekeeping operations: (a) ceasefire monitoring is taking place in more hostile settings; (b) peace implementation is being undertaken in more difficult operating environments, often with political processes susceptible to collapse; and (c) in situations that the Panel here terms "conflict management", missions are being deployed into more violent settings without the enabling frameworks that have previously driven success.

110. Ceasefire monitoring missions maintain a presence amid latent or unresolved conflict where political settlements remain elusive. But some of those missions increasingly face asymmetric threats and/or the presence of violent extremists who target the mission. Beyond a collapse of the cessation of hostilities they were sent to monitor, the parameters for success or failure of those missions have never been clearly articulated, nor has the point at which such missions should be withdrawn or replaced by another form of international engagement. In environments where new conflict has emerged and threatens the mission, those questions become even more pressing. While those questions are considered, significant investments are needed to better protect and empower mission personnel in the course of their duties.

111. Peace implementation missions have typically been deployed as multidimensional peacekeeping operations in support of a peace agreement or a political transition. Those missions seek to maintain political processes, protect civilians and help sustain peace through mandated civilian support efforts. Such missions require the necessary capabilities to implement the mandate, and must be willing to use force to protect civilians and maintain a deterrent posture to proactively dissuade "spoilers", defined as those who lie outside and seek to undermine the peace process, including through violent means.

112. Peace implementation missions face significant challenges today. Large, austere operating environments stretch thin the mission presence, "spoilers" may emerge with greater capacity and political momentum for sustaining peace and for addressing key aspects of the mandate may flag, causing missions to extend their presence over longer periods. In situations where the peace process has frayed or political commitments have collapsed, missions are not only likely to be deployed for longer, but as crises arise they may oscillate between limited peace implementation and conflict management until political solutions can be reasserted.

113. Today, several United Nations missions are effectively being called upon to undertake a conflict management role in situations of violent conflict and in the absence of a viable peace process or where the peace process has effectively broken down. Responsibility for navigating such crises should not be given lightly to United Nations peacekeeping operations, which struggle to obtain the capabilities required to function effectively in those settings. Despite those limitations, such missions are being asked to protect civilians at risk or prevent a deterioration of security conditions while attempts are made to get the peace process under way.

114. The Panel also notes that, in the past decade, the Security Council and the Secretariat have used the term "stabilization" for a number of missions that support the extension or restoration of State authority, in at least one case during ongoing armed conflict. The term "stabilization" has a wide range of interpretations, and the Panel believes the usage of that term by the United Nations requires clarification.

115. The Panel believes that the United Nations will likely continue to find itself facing "conflict management" situations in the future with missions deployed to help: (a) deter escalation; (b) contain conflict; (c) protect civilians; and (d) attempt to start or revive a peace process. The concepts, tools, mission structures and doctrine originally developed for peace implementation tasks may not be well suited for such settings. Conflict management missions will require limited and focused mandates and a distinct understanding of "success", since they are liable to struggle to achieve the forward momentum associated with success in multidimensional operations. Careful and collective reflection is required on how United Nations peace operations can operate effectively in those conflict management scenarios in the future.

116. The Panel believes that the following considerations will be important to enabling a United Nations peacekeeping operation to operate with even limited success in such settings:

(a) The mandate must be clear and achievable and linked to a political strategy;

(b) Mission objectives should be as focused as possible (i.e., working towards an agreement to end hostilities, offering confidence-building measures, promoting political dialogue, protecting civilians and monitoring and reporting on human rights);

(c) Wider civilian tasks that assume, and indeed require, a peace to keep should be curtailed until the political conditions become more conducive to success. Instead, the focus of a mission's civilian capacities should be the political effort to achieve or restore those conditions;

(d) Missions should have a clear entry strategy, including through partnerships with bridging operations by others to ensure a robust deterrent posture at start-up;

(e) In the absence of a peace agreement, assurances should be sought on the responsibilities and commitments of conflict parties to serve as a basis for dialogue on managing the mission's presence and activities going forward;

(f) Missions must deploy with the necessary military and medical capabilities and security procedures to deal with emergencies upon arrival;

(g) They must operate on the assumption that the use of force may be necessary from the outset to protect civilians and to defend the mission and its mandate, as set out in paragraph 128. Contingents must deploy with the necessary equipment and training and a clear understanding of the mission rules of engagement.

117. With those measures in place, a United Nations peacekeeping operation could, for a finite period, maintain itself in a conflict management posture in violent settings and conduct limited operations while political efforts to seek a viable

solution are intensified. In such situations, it is indispensable that the United Nations play the lead or a leading role in the peace process. Where a viable political process cannot be established with the parties, a United Nations peacekeeping operation will struggle to succeed. In such settings, the Security Council and Secretariat must regularly review the viability of the mission on the ground.

118. Decisions about deploying a peacekeeping operation into situations of sustained armed conflict, particularly where it may be perceived as partial to one side, must be taken in full knowledge of the well-known capability limits of a United Nations force and the potential that those limits may be ruthlessly exposed. In the face of hostilities, and absent fast-deploying and interoperable forces, a robust military logistics system, strong command and control and ready reserves, none of which the United Nations has invested in or developed to date, United Nations peacekeeping missions may struggle even to reach full operating capability. In such situations, given those limitations, it is the view of the Panel that the Security Council should consider other actors, such as ad hoc coalitions of Member States or regional actors, as more appropriate first responders. Those other actors will more likely have the comparative advantage in speed and capability, as well as in command and control arrangements necessary to conduct sustained combat operations.

Counter-terrorism and enforcement tasks

119. The Panel believes that United Nations peacekeeping missions, owing to their composition and character, are not suited to engage in military counter-terrorism operations. They lack the specific equipment, intelligence, logistics, capabilities and specialized military preparation required, among other aspects. Such operations should be undertaken by the host Government or by a capable regional force or an ad hoc coalition authorized by the Security Council.

120. However, where asymmetric threats are present in the operating environment, United Nations missions must be provided with the necessary capabilities and training. In addition, an appropriate concept of operations and rules of engagement are required to protect themselves and deliver their mandates, including through preventive and pre-emptive postures and willingness to use force tactically to protect civilians and United Nations personnel. Troop- and police-contributing countries must be kept fully apprised of the conditions of the operating environment and threat assessments, and deploy with the requisite capability and political will to confront such contingencies with full respect for clear and unified United Nations command and control.

121. The Panel recognizes that it is the prerogative of the Security Council to authorize United Nations peacekeeping operations to undertake enforcement tasks, including targeted offensive operations, and that it has done so in the past, as in Somalia in 1993 and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 2013. Those mandates involve a shift from tactical decisions regarding the proactive and pre-emptive use of force to protect civilians and United Nations personnel from threats to a fundamentally different type of posture that uses offensive force to degrade, neutralize or defeat an opponent.

122. The Panel believes that extreme caution must guide any call for a United Nations peacekeeping operation to undertake enforcement tasks and that any such mandated task should be a time-limited, exceptional measure. Such tasks must be conducted in support of a clear and achievable political end state and in full respect

of international humanitarian law. Such operations may make the United Nations forces, and the mission as a whole, a party to the conflict and require attention to the humanitarian and other consequences that invariably flow from the sustained use of force. The Panel supports the view of humanitarian interlocutors on the need to maintain a clear distinction between peacekeeping operations with enforcement mandates and humanitarian actors and objectives.

123. In situations where a United Nations peacekeeping operation is deployed in parallel with a non-United Nations force undertaking military counter-terrorism operations or other offensive operations, a clear division of labour and distinction of roles must guide their respective operations. The United Nations must in those situations maintain a strict adherence to its impartial commitment to the respect for human rights. When such non-United Nations forces depart, the United Nations should not be called upon to assume residual tasks beyond its capability.

Principles of peacekeeping

124. Some Member States, including many leading troop contributors, have expressed to the Panel their strong view that the three core principles of peacekeeping, i.e., consent of the parties, impartiality and the non-use of force except in self-defence or defence of the mandate, should be upheld. Others, however, have suggested that they are outmoded and require adjustment. The Panel has listened carefully to all of those views.

125. The Panel is convinced of the importance of the core principles of peacekeeping to guide successful United Nations peacekeeping operations in observing ceasefires and implementing peace agreements. At the same time, the Panel stresses its concern that the principles of peacekeeping should never be used as an excuse for failure to protect civilians or defend the mission proactively. Moreover, two decades of peacekeeping experience in more volatile settings calls for a flexible and progressive interpretation of those principles.

126. As the Brahimi Report stated, "impartiality" is not the same as neutrality or equal treatment of all parties in all cases for all time, when in some cases local parties consist not of moral equals but of obvious aggressors and victims. Impartiality must mean adherence to the principles of the Charter and to the objectives of a mission mandate that is rooted in Charter principles. On the ground, the impartiality of United Nations missions should be judged by its determination to respond even-handedly to the actions of different parties based not on who has acted but by the nature of their actions. Missions should protect civilians irrespective of the origin of the threat. They should promote respect by all actors for the human rights of the local population and the combatants regardless of affiliation. They should seek political solutions respectful of the legitimate interests and grievances of all parties and society at large.

127. "Consent of the main parties" had a clear meaning when peacekeepers were deployed in the context of a ceasefire or peace agreement in an inter-State conflict or between clear parties in a civil war. In conflict management settings today, where fighting continues and is not confined to two parties, there may be practical obstacles to obtaining consent beyond that of the Government. Clearly the consent of the Government is fundamental for the deployment of a mission, and that should be reinforced. Obtaining and maintaining the consent of the other parties remains an important objective of any mission and should be pursued to the extent possible.

That strengthens the view of the Panel that any peacekeeping operation must be a part of a robust political process in which the United Nations is deeply involved, and must continuously seek to build consent to the United Nations role and presence through an impartial posture.

128. "Self-defence" is a well-recognized concept and is thoroughly defined in United Nations rules of engagement. However, the concept of "defence of the mandate" requires clarity as to which tasks within the mandate may require the use of force. It should always include the responsibility to protect civilians and missions should be proactive in doing so. Different threats must be met with the appropriate use of military force, ranging from containment via deterrence and coercion to direct confrontation, particularly when civilians or peacekeepers are at risk. The actual use of force may not be necessary if the potential attackers perceive and know United Nations troops have the determination and capabilities to respond forcefully in case of attack.

129. The Panel believes that the foregoing analysis of the principles for peacekeeping is reasonable in the light of contemporary challenges. Existing Secretariat doctrinal materials, developed in consultation with Member States, largely align with those interpretations. The Panel notes, however, that ultimately the clarity of what is required for any particular mission is not found in doctrine, but contained in clear and mission-specific statements of unit requirements, guidelines for troop- and police-contributing countries and rules of engagement. Determinations on whether to commit personnel must be made on the basis of a clear understanding of the mission's specific unit requirements. Underlying doctrinal disagreements cannot be permitted to disrupt the chain of command, which may lead to confusion in military operations when units are deployed. It is in the interest of all, including the Security Council, the Secretariat and troop- and police-contributing countries, that every deployed contingent understands fully the required tasks and is committed to deliver on them. In that regard, the Panel emphasizes the importance of early and sustained triangular consultations, as described in paragraphs 188-191, to achieve a shared understanding of the mandate, threat assessment and specific unit requirements. Those efforts should support prospective contributors in arriving at a fully informed decision of whether or not to commit personnel to a particular operation.

130. **With respect to the use of force for peace and protection, the Panel recommends that:**

(a) **When required, Member States ensure that peace operations have available contingents with the necessary equipment, training and enabling capacities to respond to threats, and to sustain them in using force proactively in self-defence and to protect civilians and dissuade spoilers, in line with their mandates;**

(b) **When United Nations peacekeeping operations are deployed absent a viable peace process, the Security Council, Secretariat, regional actors and all Member States work proactively to advance a political process and support other conditions for success, and review regularly the viability of the mission;**

(c) **United Nations missions not be mandated to conduct counter-terrorism operations and, in situations where a United Nations mission operates in parallel with counter-terrorism forces, the respective role of each**

presence be clearly delineated. The Security Council should ensure that upon exit of such forces, the United Nations is not required to assume residual tasks beyond its capability.

E. Sustaining peace

Rethinking the approach

131. Peace processes do not end with a ceasefire, a peace agreement or an election. Such events constitute merely a phase, rather than the conclusion, of a peace process. In fact, they may be times of great vulnerability, when belligerents face the uncertainty of making the transition to peaceful politics and when spoilers mobilize. Yet it is at that time that international stakeholders often turn their attention elsewhere.

132. Increased international political vigilance and engagement is most needed in those critical phases. Central to sustaining peace and avoiding a relapse into conflict is the need to maintain and strengthen political momentum, to address underlying causes of the conflict, to deepen and broaden peace processes through inclusion and to advance reconciliation and healing. Peacebuilding is not State-building; those are distinct but interlinked efforts. The challenge for peace operations is to help sustain peace while a long-term, often generational effort to strengthen State institutions gets under way.

133. The international community has supported a number of countries in sustaining peace, and some with success, as in Sierra Leone and Timor-Leste, among others. The Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund are working to provide better support to that common endeavour. However, those mechanisms and United Nations peace operations, like other actors, need to draw lessons from past experience and to overcome several deficits that continue to characterize many international efforts today.

Seven deficits

134. **The mindset**. Countries emerging from conflict are not blank pages and their people are not "projects". They are the main agents of peace. However, the international approach is often based on generic models that ignore national realities. It often overlooks social mechanisms or informal institutions and networks of mutual assistance that deliver services and enjoy trust at the community level, where women play an important role. Efforts to sustain peace must build upon those institutions and the resilience and reconciliation processes of local communities, and not undermine them.

135. **Nationally owned priorities**. When countries set out their priorities and they enjoy strong national support, they must be respected. Too often they are not. As an example, the Group of Seven Plus countries, a group of 18 fragile and conflict-affected States, have identified five critical goals based on their experience: (a) legitimate politics, (b) security, (c) justice, (d) economic foundations and (e) revenues and services. Those were echoed in the *World Development Report 2011: Conflict, Security and Development*,[11] which highlighted the importance of

[11] World Bank (Washington, D.C., 2011).

"inclusive enough" politics, security, justice and jobs in conflict-affected countries. Yet, it is for those core functions of the State that international support often is at its weakest, with less than 5 per cent of total official development assistance (ODA) provided to politics, security and justice. With regard to ODA impacts, communities with the highest levels of violence and instability are least likely to see improvements in their livelihoods.[12]

136. **Supply-driven templates and technical approaches to reform**. International actors often provide assistance to "strengthen" institutions, including through advice on legislative and regulatory frameworks, institutional infrastructure and equipment, training and mentoring. However, their templates tend to ignore critical factors. The "new" institutions are usually subject to intense pressures from political interests and susceptible to corruption by powerful groups. Reforms must be tailored and carefully reviewed in the light of such political dynamics. Particular attention should be paid to sensitive areas such as the selection and training of police, disarmament and demobilization programmes and the prioritization and sequencing of services to different communities or districts.

137. **The neglected fiscal dimension**. With few exceptions, there are serious shortfalls in donor funding for most of the countries where United Nations peace operations are working, and particularly in funding for priorities critical to sustaining peace. If the trend of risk aversion among donors continues, the risks to peace will mount. International efforts sometimes exacerbate that challenge by designing large institutions with salary or operating costs that cannot be accommodated within national budgets. Reforms must be designed with regard to realistic scenarios for revenue generation. As the gap between institutional design and revenue widens, so does the gap in performance, and the spread of corruption accelerates in those often underfunded "new" State institutions.

138. **Lack of strategic planning, coordination and integration**. Despite many commitments to work differently, United Nations and other international support to conflict-affected countries remains short-term, uncoordinated and piecemeal, linked to multiple funding frameworks. Those challenges are particularly prominent in the security sector, which is of critical importance to sustaining peace. Priorities must be few, based on a joint assessment, coordinated and sequenced on the basis of what is realistic for the country to implement.

139. **The focus on the capital and its elites**. The focus of peace processes and State-building efforts tends to be on the capital and on a small political and civil service elite. It can take years for vital peace dividends such as jobs and livelihoods to percolate outside that small circle. While such efforts can succeed for a time, overall levels of economic and social marginalization can persist or even worsen. Of particular concern are some groups whose inclusion and reinsertion are core to any peace process, including demobilized ex-soldiers, ex-militias and ex-rebels, refugees and displaced people, and so are often particularly affected. Their continued marginalization may threaten the sustainability of peace in the short and longer term.

140. **Do no harm: reconciliation and trust**. Reconciliation and efforts to rebuild trust between leaders and their societies must be nationally led. Political leadership and effective governance are needed to provide safe space for inclusive dialogue.

[12] Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, *States of Fragility 2015: Meeting Post-2015 Ambitions* (Paris, OECD Publishing, 2015).

Civil society, women and religious leaders should come to the forefront in those processes, encouraging both communities and leaders to look to the future and engage in dialogue, reconciliation and healing. The United Nations and the international community should encourage and support such efforts, including on promoting accountability and assistance to victims.

141. Yet, enthusiastic reformers may not understand that some of their own efforts may work against processes of reconciliation and trust. Prescriptions leading to early or fractious electoral competition or constitutional disputes may exacerbate the controversies of the past. International assistance programmes can generate tensions within and among communities when they appear to provide peace dividends selectively. When it comes to support to State institutions, local people often have deep misgivings about the prospect of their expansion, particularly if the State is perceived as tainted by corruption or exclusionary politics. Supporting programmes and public institutions that have legitimacy in the eyes of communities is critical for sustaining peace.

Role of the United Nations system

142. The United Nations should, through its convening role, mobilize and help sustain political engagement among high-level international stakeholders, including contact groups, regional partnerships and Security Council members. In addition to its global membership, it is the ability of the United Nations to reflect the concerns, culture and dynamics of the country concerned that will determine the effectiveness of its convening capacity.

143. The Special Representative and/or Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, working at the country level in support of the coordination efforts of the Government, should help convene international stakeholders around a "big table", including regional and subregional actors, international financial institutions, the United Nations country team and relevant Member States. Through joint assessments, the security, political, socioeconomic and natural resource and other dimensions of conflict should be analysed and the potential drivers of conflict mapped, together with local capacities and resiliencies that can be built upon. That can help to develop a political road map, coordination framework and division of labour among relevant actors.

144. Partnership between the United Nations and international financial institutions, including effective implementation of the United Nations-World Bank partnership framework, is important and its implementation should become more systematic. The two-window model of multi-donor trust funds (i.e., United Nations- and World Bank-managed windows) should be seen as best practice. Joint United Nations-World Bank public expenditure reviews in the security and justice sectors to enhance their effectiveness and transparency are promising areas of cooperation. Addressing corruption is another area that should be prioritized for cooperation.

145. While the United Nations can convene and help coordinate others, it must set an example by better integrating its own diverse efforts, both at Headquarters and in the field. Without strong Headquarters support, coordination efforts in the field face major challenges. Missions should work closely with United Nations country teams. At the same time, United Nations agencies, funds and programmes are not always ready to prioritize key aspects of sustaining peace or capable of delivering on them effectively, and rely on voluntary funding that is often absent or not aligned with

Security Council mandates. To address those challenges, missions and United Nations country teams need a better set of financing arrangements that help them to deliver together and to deliver more effectively, including scaled-up support for the Peacebuilding Fund, better capitalized pooled funds at the country level and, within mission budgets, programmatic funding for mandated tasks in support of peace consolidation.

146. To strengthen integration, joint United Nations assessments, integrated planning and an agreed division of labour should be in place. While decisions on structural integration should be taken on a case-by-case basis, strategic coherence in the field must be achieved.

147. At United Nations Headquarters, the Secretary-General should enhance his or her efforts to bring together all parts of the United Nations system. That goal will not be achieved without strong leadership from Headquarters across relevant departments as well as agencies, funds and programmes, and effective backstopping arrangements.

148. Inclusive and equitable economic development is a pillar for sustaining peace. The United Nations should take into account economic dimensions, including livelihoods and jobs and transparent and accountable management of natural resources, including revenues, land and, particularly in zones of conflict, basic services. The United Nations Summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, and its Goal 16,[13] advocating the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies, should be supported, making that priority even more inescapable.

149. **With respect to the role of the United Nations system in sustaining peace, the Panel recommends that:**

(a) **The United Nations leverage its convening role to help mobilize and maintain international political engagement for sustaining peace, and support coordinated international efforts;**

(b) **Special representatives and/or special envoys of the Secretary-General convene international stakeholders and undertake joint assessments with national stakeholders that define a political road map and coordination framework, a package of measures and a clear division of labour in support of efforts to help sustain peace;**

(c) **The Secretary-General, with the support of Member States, make a focused effort to bring together all parts of the system to ensure a system-wide response to the emerging needs of the country in conflict;**

(d) **United Nations leaders be adequately supported and held accountable for their collective effectiveness;**

(e) **The Secretary-General and Member States consider, in order to enhance United Nations financing in support of sustaining peace:**

(i) **Scaling up the fast-track window (Immediate Response Facility), of the Peacebuilding Fund, building on a clear United Nations vision,**

[13] Goal 16 of the post-2015 development agenda provides: "Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels" (see A/68/970 and Corr.1).

enhanced flexibility in its implementation partners and fast-track procedures;

(ii) **Establishing pooled country-level United Nations funds linked to a political road map and integrated strategies;**

(iii) **Clarifying practical aspects of cooperation between missions and United Nations country teams, such as co-location in remote areas, including cost-sharing and reimbursement arrangements for shared services and other aspects of support and administration;**

(iv) **Enabling the use of assessed contributions by partners based on comparative advantage;**

(f) **An independent review of the current capacities of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes to aid in sustaining peace and their potential enhancement be undertaken, taking into account the analysis and recommendations of the Panel and of the Advisory Group of Experts on Review of Peacebuilding Architecture.**

Role of United Nations peace operations

150. Peace operations should ensure respect for national ownership of the host country and for the perspectives of its people in all efforts to sustain peace. That is particularly important when mandates of the Security Council are not grounded in commitments undertaken by the parties as part of a peace agreement. A sequenced mandating process, as described in paragraph 184 of the present report, would help to address some of those deficits and facilitate more effective and implementable mandates tailored to missions. Fewer priorities, fewer tasks and better sequencing should be the aim.

151. Building on the sequencing approach, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and mission leadership should be empowered and supported to assess, through broad consultations with national actors, United Nations country teams and other international actors as required, the context and the most appropriate package of measures to help sustain peace, to be reviewed together with mandate renewal. The package should form the basis of a compact between the United Nations and the host Government. The Special Representative should brief the Security Council on the progress and timing of adjustments to the mandate.

152. Most missions today are provided with a single tool to implement civilian tasks: staff posts. While that may ensure a strong field presence, the inability to match that presence with timely and modest programmatic support is short-sighted and leads to missed opportunities. Whether for police development, corrections or support to local authorities, the Panel heard consistently that modest amounts of programmatic support could help develop capacity and yield better results in mandate implementation. Currently, that type of support is limited to quick-impact projects and reinsertion payments for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. Other components should be able to request similar support, with appropriate justifications and full reporting. Such programmatic funding for mandated tasks should be implemented by the entity capable of most effectively delivering results, whether that is the mission itself, the United Nations country team or other implementing partners.

153. Each mission should have or be able to draw upon requisite local, cultural, linguistic and country expertise; ensure regular and structured engagement with local communities, including women, youth, religious and other leaders; and identify resources for the regular commissioning of independent surveys of local perceptions of the mission and progress towards mission objectives, linked to strategic communications efforts.

154. Legitimate politics are at the heart of sustainable peace. In advising on elections, advisers should carefully consider their timing, and their implementation should aim at sharing political power in an inclusive manner rather than concentrating it. Efforts to enhance governance should aim at addressing legacies of deep distrust between Governments and marginalized groups, helping to repair what often is a broken relationship. Women can be at the forefront of those efforts, encouraging a process of national reconciliation and healing and calling on both communities and leaders to commit to a new social contract.

155. Governments face growing popular demands to address corruption. A United Nations peace operation should ensure that its country analysis encompasses the dynamics and drivers of corruption, advocate for appropriate attention to corruption and provide political support to those providing technical assistance in that area. It should include civil society efforts to support transparency and accountability.

156. Peace operations should pay focused attention to community dynamics, particularly in zones of conflict, deploying local offices as broadly as security conditions permit. They should maintain the closest possible interaction with communities and support national initiatives regarding rural and local development. Missions should lend their assistance to the resolution of local conflicts and support community efforts to move towards reconciliation.

157. A United Nations peace operation cannot address all areas of the justice system, and a combined United Nations effort is necessary for sustainable results. Justice, the rule of law and human rights are mutually reinforcing elements of the work of United Nations peace operations and United Nations country teams, and need to be addressed in an integrated way. Too often, the United Nations has approached justice and the rule of law on the one hand, and human rights on the other, as separate areas of operation. That has sometimes led to programmes aimed at developing capacity for the rule of law without paying due attention to human rights, which are a key component to institutional reform. Efforts are also needed to examine the chain of institutions that must work together effectively, including courts, prosecutors and police. Progress at one end of the justice chain is often undermined by failures or delays at the other. Inhumane prison conditions can become flashpoints for riots and radicalization and need mission attention. Judicial and corrections officers in missions should be selected to ensure contextually appropriate advice and support.

158. United Nations peace operations should work to ensure that the rule of law operates in a manner that protects human rights. That includes addressing impunity through supporting appropriate mechanisms of transitional justice in situations where past violations have not been resolved and will be an obstacle to lasting peace.

159. The security sector is gravely affected by the above deficits and can be the greatest spoiler of peace. That requires efforts to support security sector reform in a

more effective and coordinated way. Given its role in police development and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, the United Nations can and should play a convening and coordinating role in security sector reform if so requested by the Government, making sure coherent reform efforts take place in all security sectors, as affirmed in Security Council resolution 2151 (2014). The United Nations lacks technical capacity to support defence sector reform. Nevertheless, given the strategic interests of bilateral actors in the defence sector, such reform efforts should be aligned with overall coordination of security sector reform, contributing to sustaining peace.

160. **With respect to the role of United Nations peace operations to support the sustaining of peace, the Panel recommends that:**

(a) **The Secretary-General include within proposed mission budgets programmatic resources when they are necessary for the effective implementation of mandated tasks. Such programmatic funding should be implemented by the entity capable of most effectively delivering results, whether by the mission itself, the United Nations country team or other implementing partners;**

(b) **United Nations peace operations ensure that their country analyses encompass the dynamics and drivers of corruption, advocate for appropriate attention to corruption and provide political support to those providing technical advice in that area;**

(c) **In promoting sustainable peace, United Nations peace operations provide political and operational support to processes of inclusion and national reconciliation;**

(d) **Special representatives of the Secretary-General ensure that mission structures and coordination arrangements with United Nations country teams provide for an integrated approach to justice, the rule of law and human rights;**

(e) **Missions be prepared, when requested, to play a convening and coordinating role in security sector reform.**

United Nations police

161. A credible national police service is important for sustaining peace in divided societies, yet the police are often seen as instruments of power and abuse. Police reform and development after conflict is a significant challenge that cannot be accomplished in only a few years. It requires advancing the legacies of the politicization of security and an abusive past. Realism about what can be achieved with the support of a peace operation and within its lifespan is required.

162. The development of police and other law enforcement agencies requires more than reforming and training the police. The development of the relevant ministry, as well as its key police institutions, is essential to providing political support and direction, managerial oversight and budget and legal frameworks. Capacity development must address not only operational issues but also a wide range of managerial and administrative functions. It cannot be done in isolation from other institutions in the criminal justice chain or from internal and external oversight mechanisms, such as internal discipline and parliamentary, judicial and human

rights institutions. United Nations police officers are not usually trained to deliver police reform, and the United Nations model of short-term police deployments is supply-driven and unsuited for capacity development. A significant change in approach is needed.

163. Partnerships with other actors, coordinated under strong and responsible national leadership, will be essential. Where mandated, national capacity gaps should inform the composition of United Nations police components and be reflected in police capacity studies, drawing on new forms of police contributions better suited to capacity development. Examples of new forms of police contributions include the use of civilian experts as police specialists in Timor-Leste; specialized teams in Haiti, linked to ongoing training; and police training teams from the region to serve as United Nations police, as in pre-crisis South Sudan. Similar capacities and longer-term specialized expertise should be included in the staffing of missions mandated to assist police development. Civilian capacity, specialized teams and related measures should be reflected in new modalities for police planning, recruitment, guidance and training. To increase the effectiveness and impact of capacity support, police-contributing countries should be encouraged to extend rotation cycles to 12 months. The host Government's choice of police systems and approaches should be respected.

164. As a first step, a strategic guidance framework on United Nations policing covering policy and guidance in core areas, including capacity-building, should be urgently completed, with commensurate resources for its implementation. There should be consistent monitoring and evaluation of the police development efforts of United Nations peace operations, taking into account the assessment of the host Government and civil society. To implement this new approach, when finalized, the organizational structure, human resources and capacity of the Police Division of the Secretariat should be reviewed.

165. A gender-sensitive approach to policing is essential to setting an example for national counterparts and to protecting civilians more effectively. The Secretariat and Member States should develop a strategy with concrete measures to increase the percentage of women police in deployments to United Nations peace operations, in particular senior officers. Member States should accelerate these efforts both through generic recruitment and by providing specialized personnel to units for the protection of women and children against sexual violence. Police components should coordinate closely with women protection advisers, gender advisers and child protection advisers within the mission.

166. Police components are often confronted with a context of rising transnational organized crime. Missions should acquire expertise in this area, when requested and in partnership with others to support national police capacity. This is also a mission-wide concern and a strategic risk to sustaining peace. Rising crime and the proliferation of small arms are also features of many post-conflict settings and require multi-pronged responses.

167. Formed police units are utilized in United Nations peacekeeping operations to execute joint tactical operations in the area of public order management, provide security support to host national law enforcement agencies, the protection of civilians, United Nations personnel and facilities and to undertake security tasks in mission transitions. Given the limited ability of countries to contribute such units in a timely manner, the United Nations faces difficulties in expanding the base of their

contribution and ensuring that they sustain all statement of unit requirements and standards while serving in the field. Stronger partnership arrangements between potential contributors and donor countries, as well as agreements to mobilize the available "public order" capacities of formed police units could help. In addition, improvements are needed in predeployment preparation and oversight in mission operational readiness to ensure that formed police units meet all statement of unit requirements and training required for their tasks and in compliance with the necessary policy standards.

168. **With respect to policing in United Nations peace operations, the Panel recommends that:**

(a) **To better support national police development and reform and new modalities for police planning and recruitment, the Secretariat develop guidance and training. United Nations police strategies should be based on capacity assessments in the country and reflected in mission planning, staffing and recruitment and should include specialized teams and the use of long-term civilian experts;**

(b) **To increase the effectiveness and impact of capacity support, police-contributing countries supporting police development and reform be encouraged to extend rotation cycles to 12 months;**

(c) **The Secretariat complete the strategic guidance framework on United Nations policing currently being prepared and propose commensurate resources for its implementation;**

(d) **Mission leadership consistently monitor and evaluate police development efforts, taking into account the assessment of the host Government and civil society;**

(e) **To increase the availability and the effectiveness of formed police units, the Secretariat expand the base of police contribution and partnerships with donors and regional organizations, assist police-contributing countries in strengthening predeployment preparation and improve performance and oversight management, including adherence to agreed policies and standards;**

(f) **The organizational structure, staffing and capacity of the Police Division be reviewed to better meet new approaches to supporting national police.**

Exit strategy

169. United Nations peace operations must, from the outset, work towards grounding peace in a way that would render their support obsolete. Progress in relation to the package of measures agreed with the host Government, described in paragraph 151, should be regularly reviewed, adapting the mandate and United Nations support to developments on the ground over time. This can include a limited set of carefully selected benchmarks, focusing on efforts that would most successfully deepen, broaden and sustain the peace. This should provide the basis for the process of transition and exit, closely planned with national counterparts and regional partners, among others. Throughout their duration, missions should work to avoid creating patterns of dependence or sidelining national partners in ways that might hamper rather than accelerate those efforts.

170. Planning for mission transitions should be undertaken with the closest engagement of national authorities and should encompass retraining and job placement for national staff. They should take into account and seek to minimize the potential economic impacts of the mission's departure. Follow-on political engagement, security arrangements or "over the horizon" guarantees may be needed from regional, international or other partners. Missions should, from the outset, partner with other United Nations entities in a way that facilitates the handover of tasks to follow-on United Nations presences, including the United Nations country team. Any residual tasks should be adequately resourced, and a comprehensive transition plan to that effect should be put in place.

III. Empowering the field

A. Setting a clear direction and forging a common purpose

1. Analysis and strategy

171. Empowering the field begins with the effective design of missions, initiated well in advance at Headquarters. For this, the Organization needs a core capacity for strategic analysis and assessment to set out potential courses of action for senior managers.

172. Currently, the Secretariat has limited capacity to gather and assess United Nations reporting, married with external open source information, to underpin its conflict assessments, policy and strategy formulation and planning. This requires professional analysts with access to system-wide thematic knowledge, including on the economic, historical, cultural, anthropological and resource dimensions of a conflict, as well as gender and human rights analyses and assessment of threats to civilian populations and United Nations personnel. Secretariat desk officers are stretched thin over many portfolios, and when a crisis emerges and a mission is deployed, they are often overwhelmed by the day-to-day demands of supporting missions and generating briefing materials. As leadership of a portfolio passes between lead departments, the knowledge and experience of a country situation or a region does not always pass with it. Compounding this, the United Nations has always struggled to establish effective policy and strategy formulation processes. The Secretariat's cross-departmental Policy Committee and its predecessor, the Executive Committee on Peace and Security, have not consistently provided the required decision-making on country strategies.

173. The shortcomings of the Secretariat's policy, analysis and strategy development processes are exacerbated by the weak implementation of existing processes. With the United Nations often engaging in conflict resolution at a late stage, strategy development in response to a crisis is likely to be under great time pressure. The haste with which a strategy must be developed and a mission planned drives the Organization to undertake rushed assessment missions, while bureaucratic friction often undermines the capacity to draw effectively on existing expertise, both internal and external. Under such pressures, past plans have often been built upon hastily developed assumptions and traditionally available tools, rather than on a deep analysis of the situation and clear high-level strategic parameters for United Nations-wide engagement. The Secretariat must begin its strategic analysis and decision-making earlier and must improve the quality of its analysis. The

Organization needs a system-wide dedicated capacity to serve as the institutional hub for strategic analysis and planning to inform senior management decision-making and drive later planning and action. It should be able to develop strategic options and scenarios, drawing upon expertise available across and outside the system, and to test them for feasibility, risk mitigation and resource implications before advancing recommendations to the executive bodies in the Secretariat. The Panel believes that that capacity should report to the Secretary-General.

2. Planning peace operations

174. The Secretariat should begin initial planning for a peace operation as soon as decisions are made regarding the strategic objectives of the United Nations for a given situation and the type of operation recommended. This includes whether uniformed capabilities should be deployed and which areas need support.

175. For any potential new mission, the Secretary-General should appoint and empower a full-time senior leader of the process. Wherever possible, that person should be a senior member of the future mission leadership team or even the intended future Special Representative of the Secretary-General. He or she should be supported by a dedicated, integrated planning team, resourced as soon as possible from early mission commitment authority, and staffed with personnel drawn from across the system on the basis of relevant country expertise.

176. Throughout the planning process, the Secretariat must ensure that its situation analysis is driven not by assessments of what the political market will bear, either in the host country or at United Nations Headquarters, but by an understanding of the situation, needs, opportunities and constraints. The planning team should consult closely with regional organizations that may be involved, and the role and the nature of the partnership should be agreed upon during the planning process. Through a two-stage planning mandate, described in paragraph 184, the Secretariat would establish an early presence on the ground, which, while offering early assistance, would engage with the Government and civil society, undertake a deeper analysis of the situation and produce a sequenced proposal for the mission's activities.

177. As soon as possible, assessments and operational planning should be driven from the field, with the support of Headquarters. In addition to political and conflict-related analysis, integrated operational and logistics assessments must be made. Where possible, the Secretariat should propose the use of a first-stage deployment of a small mission headquarters capacity to support more in-depth planning in the field, including through the use of a two-stage and prioritized mandating approach. Members of the senior mission leadership team should be appointed early so as to work with planners at Headquarters and then with the advance mission. Once a mission's planning capabilities are in place, the initiative for planning should be with the field, where a growing understanding of the local situation should drive the process. Major course corrections or shifts in mission strategy and concepts of operations should be led by the field. In particular, revised military concepts of operations should originate in the mission. For peacekeeping operations, mission concepts of operations, including concepts of operation for the military, police and logistics, should be fully integrated and approved jointly by the leadership of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support.

178. The planning capacity is underresourced and should be strengthened. Even large missions with expansive mandates are typically staffed with small planning capacities. Mission planning functions should be reviewed regularly to ensure that they are adequately resourced, drawing from a higher quality roster of planners. In-mission analysis should focus on the underlying features of the conflict beyond political issues alone. It should, for example, include analysis of the economic and cultural dimensions, local structures for managing and mitigating conflict, resource flows and revenue or illicit power networks. Beyond their analytical and planning staff, missions need access to regional and local expertise with an in-depth understanding of the country, region and conflict dynamics. Missions should have the resources to commission expert analysis and research to support mandate implementation, and to draw in expertise using short-term contracts or consultancy arrangements. Missions also require expertise to produce differentiated conflict analysis to better understand the impact of conflict on women and girls and thus inform strategies for their protection and participation.

179. Planning must be an ongoing process and informed by objective assessments of progress on the ground. The United Nations has not invested sufficiently in the monitoring and evaluation of its peace operations or in building results or impact measurement frameworks for missions to draw upon. A much stronger results orientation is needed throughout the planning, implementation and evaluation cycle, which should focus strongly on the objectives and purposes stipulated in the mandate. The Secretariat should introduce regular independent evaluations using external expertise to assist missions through objective assessments of progress. Such evaluations should not be compliance-focused assessment or audits, but rather a tool for mission leadership and Headquarters, linked to strategic decision points. In the field, mission leadership should proactively seek objective feedback on progress and trends from independent experts and civil society and track perceptions of the mission. The Security Council should always hear frank assessments of the situation in direct briefings from and dialogue with heads of missions.

180. **With regard to planning United Nations peace operations, the Panel recommends that:**

(a) **The Secretariat significantly enhance its strategic analysis of conflict dynamics at the local, national and regional levels to support the formulation of strategy and policy. In this regard, the Secretary-General should immediately establish a small strategic analysis and planning capacity, drawing on existing resources, reporting to the Secretary-General;**

(b) **The Secretariat ensure that mission analysis and planning includes detailed assessments, not only of political and conflict dynamics and threats to civilians but also of operational challenges related to climate, terrain and infrastructure, providing the basis for closely integrated and realistic planning between military and support elements, and resulting in the joint approval of plans by the Office of Military Affairs of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and by the Department of Field Support;**

(c) **The Secretariat ensure that:**

(i) **System-wide strategic analysis and planning is initiated earlier and planning processes are more strictly followed and supported by more rigorous situation assessments and conflict analysis;**

(ii) **Each planning process is led by an empowered senior leader, reporting to the Secretary-General and supported by a dedicated multidisciplinary planning team;**

(iii) **Where possible, advance missions are deployed to provide an initial planning capacity in the field;**

(iv) **Substantive dialogue and, where possible, joint analysis and planning are undertaken with regional actors, which should result in a clear understanding of respective roles;**

(v) **Mission analysis and planning should be strengthened by expert analysis and improved analytical tools and through the strengthening of mission planning capacities;**

(d) **As appropriate, independent evaluations be commissioned at key decision points to provide objective assessments of progress in mandate implementation and overall context.**

3. Achievable mandates and meaningful consultation

181. The Security Council and the Secretariat have a shared responsibility to ensure that mandates are clear, credible and achievable. In recent years, mandates have become lengthier and more specific, and at times less realistic or manageable. In increasingly difficult operating environments, many mandates have arguably also become less achievable, especially where worsened security or political conditions undermine or impede implementation.

182. The Secretariat and the Security Council have been unable to overcome the so-called "Christmas tree mandate" dilemma, where template language for many tasks routinely appears in mission mandates. The problem begins early in the planning process: expansive technical assessments generate comprehensive reports of the Secretary-General that in turn drive large mandates with often formulaic mandated tasks. These mandates frustrate efforts at prioritization and sequencing during implementation, and progress is increasingly hard to realize in more difficult settings.

183. Secretariat proposals for mission functions should be prioritized on the basis of a realistic assessment of political commitments, the comparative advantage of United Nations peace operations and others, the conditions on the ground and realistic prospects of success. The Security Council should resist the inclusion of mission tasks in mandates unless they are founded upon a clear and convincing rationale, justified by well-identified needs and the feasibility of timely implementation. The Secretariat and the system should present the Secretary-General's recommendations without recourse to lobbying Council members for specific interests. For many important issues, the conditions may not be right in the initial phase of a mission, and consequently sequenced and prioritized approaches are necessary to respond to needs on the ground at an opportune stage. This would allow for the streamlining of mission tasks and resource allocations.

184. The Security Council has taken a step towards prioritized and sequenced mandates. The Panel believes that as a regular practice a two-stage sequenced mandating process should be undertaken to help design more effective, situation-specific missions with more realistic, streamlined and prioritized mandated tasks.

Under that model, the mission should be given an initial mandate with an overall political goal, a limited number of initial priority tasks and an explicit planning mandate that requests the Secretary-General to return within six months with a proposal for sequenced activities based on a limited number of achievable benchmarks for mission performance. Such an approach can ensure an initial United Nations presence on the ground while providing time for the Secretariat to conduct consultations with the host Government, civil society and, to the extent possible, parties to the conflict, and to develop detailed assessments of the situation on the ground with partners. Planners should conduct scenario planning exercises with stress tests to ensure that the mandate and the configuration of the mission are tailored to the context. Within six months, clear options and recommendations should be presented to the Council for mission activities, linked to a clear assessment and requisite resources and capabilities. This would provide the basis for the decision on the mandate. Where requisite resources and capabilities are not available, options should be revisited and mandates reviewed and adjusted accordingly.

185. It is important in the mandating process for the Secretariat and the Security Council to engage early and frequently to develop a common understanding of a situation so as to help craft the right mandate. The Panel believes that such engagement, ideally in a fairly informal and interactive format, between the entire Council and the Secretariat, and with troop- and police-contributing countries as described below, can help to begin to resolve a number of the capability and implementation-related challenges currently being experienced. It is essential that the ongoing dialogue provide the Council with a clear assessment of the resources required and available for mandate implementation. In some cases, however, in response to the sudden onset of a crisis, the Council will decide to act urgently. In such situations in future, standby capacities or a United Nations rapid deployment capability as reflected in paragraphs 195 to 205 should be drawn upon, potentially as bridging forces, to enable a timely response alongside a thorough and well-informed two-stage planning and mandating process.

186. **With respect to the mandating process, the Panel recommends that:**

(a) **The Security Council authorize mandated tasks on the basis of a clear analysis of the situation and political strategy, taking into account needs assessments and the feasibility of implementation. Mandates must be aligned with capacities;**

(b) **The Security Council make use of sequenced and prioritized mandates as a regular practice, including a two-stage mandating process requiring the Secretary-General to return to the Council with proposals for prioritized mission tasks within an initial six-month period.**

4. Effective consultation and collaboration

187. The successful implementation of peace processes requires the commitment of many actors beyond the United Nations.

Triangular consultations with troop- and police-contributing countries

188. The lack of effective dialogue through so-called "triangular consultations" between the Security Council, troop- and police-contributing countries and the Secretariat has generated frustration on all sides and affected mandate

implementation. The Panel believes that, in order to forge a common and realistic understanding of the mandate and what is needed to implement it, the Council should institutionalize a framework to engage troop- and police-contributing countries and the Secretariat early in the mandate formulation process. This is in keeping with prior commitments to do so, such as Council resolution 1353 (2001) and related presidential statements.

189. For new missions, potential contributors must be furnished with the information required to make better decisions as to whether to offer their personnel. The aim should be a dialogue with political and military representatives that ensures a meeting of minds between the Secretariat and potential contributors on required capabilities, resulting in commitments to deliver on the mandate and concept of operations. In initiating planning earlier, more time should be available for such consultations. At the same time, the results of force generation efforts should inform ongoing planning and possible mandate adjustment to ensure that plans are developed with realism as to the capabilities available.

190. In the case of mandate renewals, the field assessments of troop- and police-contributing countries will often provide valuable perspectives for consideration by the Security Council, to inform the realism of mandates and to underscore key performance expectations. Council members, troop- and police-contributing countries and the Secretariat should participate in regular consultations at the senior levels, including, for significant mandate changes, with decision makers from capitals, as needed. The Council has recently initiated informal dialogue sessions with major contributors in advance of mandate renewals. This process should be sustained, reinforced and institutionalized.

191. Heads of mission, force commanders and police commissioners should engage in early dialogue with contingent commanders on planned changes to a mandate well in advance of the issuance of a new concept of operations and directives, so as to ensure unity of understanding of mandate changes from the top down and to ensure that the views and recommendations of operational commanders are communicated to Headquarters.

Consultation and collaboration with regional and other partners

192. The success of operations will increasingly require strong collaboration between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations from the outset. The mandating process should be increasingly collaborative, and strong alignment between the various organizations is required. Nowhere is that needed more today than between the United Nations and the African Union. The successful implementation of peace processes requires the commitment of many actors beyond the United Nations. The Security Council should seek the advice and call upon the support of Member States and regional partners to support mandate implementation, particularly where mission success will hinge on essential third party assistance.

193. **With respect to ensuring consultation and collaboration, the Panel recommends that:**

(a) **The Security Council and Secretariat strengthen efforts to establish inclusive and meaningful consultations with troop- and police-contributing countries to ensure unity of effort and a common commitment to the mandate. Such consultations should take place at the senior levels, including with**

specialized personnel, experts and high-level military officials from capitals, as needed;

(b) **The Security Council and the Secretariat ensure close and collaborative dialogue with relevant regional organizations prior to authorizing a mandate, in particular if a regional operation is or will be deployed.**

B. Improving speed, capability and performance for uniformed personnel

194. The United Nations is the sum of what its Member States place at its disposal. The Panel's consultations revealed a strong interest in strengthening United Nations capabilities for peace operations for the future. That interest must now translate into commitment. In the spirit of Article 43 of the Charter,[14] in which Member States are called upon to make arrangements to make available armed forces, assistance and facilities to the Security Council to maintain international peace and security, it is time for Member States to support new arrangements for mobilizing the requisite capabilities and strengthening systems to deliver on the mandates of peace operations in more austere and insecure environments. The Panel sees a significant future opportunity to strengthen capabilities for peace operations and to improve performance for the future. The Panel notes the Secretariat's ongoing efforts through the capability development agenda.

1. Rapid deployment capabilities

195. Slow deployment is one of the greatest impediments to more effective peace operations. When a mission trickles into a highly demanding environment, it is dangerously exposed on the ground and initial high expectations turn to disappointment, frustration and anger.

196. The Security Council has no standing army to call upon. Reliance on ad hoc solutions for rapidly deploying new missions and for crisis response has limited the timeliness and effectiveness of international response. However, repeated calls for a global on-call standby capacity have foundered time and again on concerns about predictability, availability and cost.

197. Truly rapid and effective deployment capacities will always come at a cost, but a more reliable system for responding quickly to save lives and arrest emerging conflicts can potentially avoid a larger, more costly response later. As part of a wider vision for a global-regional partnership for international peace and security,

[14] Article 43 of the Charter provides:
"1. All Members of the United Nations, in order to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security, undertake to make available to the Security Council, on its call and in accordance with a special agreement or agreements, armed forces, assistance, and facilities, including rights of passage, necessary for the purpose of maintaining international peace and security.
"2. Such agreement or agreements shall govern the numbers and types of forces, their degree of readiness and general location, and the nature of the facilities and assistance to be provided.
"3. The agreement or agreements shall be negotiated as soon as possible on the initiative of the Security Council. They shall be concluded between the Security Council and Members or between the Security Council and groups of Members and shall be subject to ratification by the signatory states in accordance with their respective constitutional processes."

the Panel believes that the United Nations, in close consultation with partners, should define the minimum essential rapid deployment capabilities required to respond to fast-emerging crises of the future. The Panel believes that the Secretariat and Member States should agree on a suite of tools on which the Security Council can draw to respond to crises, including both United Nations and non-United Nations capabilities. This should include at least four modalities: (a) a small United Nations rapid reinforcement/deployment capability; (b) arrangements for the transfer of personnel and assets in a crisis; (c) a rapidly deployable integrated United Nations headquarters; and (d) national and regional standby arrangements.

United Nations capabilities for rapid deployment

198. Since a United Nations standing capacity was first proposed, by the Secretary-General in 1948, no significant progress has been made. Nearly 70 years later, the United Nations still has no standing military capacity of any form and only a small police capacity capable of short-term support to police planning or headquarters functions in the field. Absent its own standby capability or self-deploying and self-sustaining units, the United Nations has been unable to come close to the targets set out in the Brahimi report for rapid deployment: 30 days for a traditional mission and 90 days for a complex mission. Except for those rare instances when Member States have self-deployed high-capability, self-sustaining units, the average deployment time for a United Nations contingent is six months. The Panel believes that the United Nations needs to be provided with the minimum capacity to reinforce a mission in crisis and more rapidly establish a new mission presence, whether deploying on its own or following a bridging force.

199. A small United Nations "vanguard" capability should be considered to allow the United Nations to insert a quickly responding military capability into a new mission area or to reinforce an existing mission. The Organization should be able to rely on small dedicated regional vanguard contingents capable of deploying from a regional hub and self-sustaining for up to 180 days. The Secretariat should develop options to generate and place on standby a small dedicated regional strategic reserve contingent for a group of missions, which, if required, would also serve as the vanguard for a new mission, potentially alongside rapidly deployed headquarters. The cost of maintaining such a contingent could be distributed to each of the missions in its assigned region and, when deployed, the deployment costs would be incurred by the receiving mission or by a new mission under initial commitment authority.

200. United Nations rapid deployment should also be facilitated by drawing on assets and personnel from existing missions. The provision of support from one mission to another, or to a new mission, particularly within a single region, is an important tool for the future. However, that approach requires early and detailed contingency planning and preparation by both sending and receiving missions and host countries, and the agreement of relevant troop contributors. Such a pre-negotiated, and preferably regional, framework requires the United Nations to work through a host of logistical, administrative and budgetary constraints in advance. The experience of the West Africa regional quick-reaction force provides a sound framework for the planning required.

201. The United Nations should be able to deploy an integrated civilian, military and police headquarters capacity, to be fully functional within, at most, 8 to 12 weeks of mandate authorization. As required, such capacity should include senior

mission leaders, military and police command and planning staff, and civilian capacity, including political, human rights, logistics and administrative personnel, as well as facilities, vehicles and protection elements. It should be deployed in conjunction with the use of the extraordinary administrative measures proposed in paragraph 319. The team should establish itself as a first-stage deployment for planning purposes, as described in paragraph 177, or as the advance party of a self-sustaining multidisciplinary mission headquarters, to support the planning and reception of the main body of the mission.

Standby arrangements

202. A reliable system of fast-responding regional or Member State capabilities based on national standby arrangements is required for the future. Such a system would provide the Security Council with a significant first-response capacity where slower-deploying and lower-capacity United Nations peace operations are not a viable option for a crisis. In addition to drawing on commitments of national capabilities from individual Member States, such an approach should build upon and support the development of existing and emerging regional capabilities, such as the African Standby Force and the European Union Battlegroups, in the future. In the medium term, the Secretariat should encourage the emergence of standby capacities in all regions as the basis for future collective response.

203. When a sustained international response is needed, such first-responder capabilities can also serve as a "bridging force", as they have done in the past, until the United Nations can mobilize and deploy a follow-on United Nations peace operation. International rapid response efforts to date have been ad hoc, and each time the system must reinvent itself. The United Nations should begin work with partners to define in more concrete terms a framework and standards for bridging transitions from first responders to a United Nations mission.

204. This should include arrangements for "rehatting" deployed forces as United Nations "blue helmets". Recent experiences with that modality have placed an onerous logistical burden on a United Nations system designed for a different model of force generation. The Secretariat should engage with regional organizations to develop a common appreciation of rehatting issues, including performance, conduct and accountability, and logistics support requirements. In some situations, the perceptions of the parties and the local population about the rehatting of units that may previously have engaged in enforcement-type actions must be assessed. Such concerns need to be taken into account from the outset in preparations for transition.

205. Standby arrangements have faltered in the past, owing largely to concerns about cost, and a future framework will need to confront the issue squarely. In some cases, the United Nations may well be needed to provide case-by-case enabling support and resources to support a rapid response authorized by the Security Council. The Panel makes proposals for the provision of such enabling support to the African Union in section III.C.1, Strengthening global-regional partnerships.

206. **With respect to rapid deployment, the Panel recommends that:**

(a) **The Secretariat present, for Member State consideration, proposals for a United Nations "vanguard" capability and rapidly deployable integrated headquarters for new missions;**

(b) **The Secretariat consult with Member States and regional organizations on the options for a regional and global capacity for rapid deployment capabilities, including to serve as bridging forces, and prepare a proposal for Member States.**

2. Mobilizing faster, better capabilities

207. The development of United Nations rapid deployment options outlined above must be complemented by a drive to accelerate the regular force and police generation by the Secretariat. The Secretariat should carry out an in-depth analysis of the reasons for the current slow deployment times and present options to the Security Council and the General Assembly outlining the reductions in deployment times that can be achieved by various additional measures or resources. The Secretariat should not shy away from recommending policy changes, resources or political support to help to remove persistent bottlenecks, including in supporting troop- and police-contributing countries in their predeployment preparations.

208. Obtaining uniformed capabilities for United Nations missions should not be seen as a technical exercise alone. It is as much a matter of political mobilization as it is of force generation. Achieving progress requires political commitment and support. Peace operations are political partnerships, and the Secretary-General cannot be expected to bear the responsibility for force generation alone. Whenever military units are authorized, the Security Council, including both its permanent and its elected members, should be ready to actively support requests from the Secretary-General through all diplomatic channels. The Secretariat's recent initiatives towards more strategic force generation is a welcome step and must be resourced adequately.

209. The number of countries contributing to peacekeeping has been growing thanks to determined efforts to expand the base of personnel. Recent high-level political efforts to support greater participation in peacekeeping operations are a welcome development and should be sustained. Given the growing needs for more advanced capabilities in missions, it is crucial to reverse the decline in contributions from many high-capability countries.

210. The Panel deems it particularly important that the forces of permanent members of the Security Council participate in United Nations peacekeeping operations, including those with protection of civilians mandates. Such military participation would serve to restore full partnership among Member States in the collective endeavours of the Organization and send a strong message to the membership about the confidence of the Council in an operation. It would put the parties to the conflict and their supporters on notice that the Council is committed to the success of the mission and ready to invest in the settlement of the conflict. This could make a difference in the quality of policy deliberations at United Nations Headquarters as much as it could affect effectiveness in the field.

211. The United Nations reimbursement system is a unique framework and an important tool for meeting future challenges. In addition to recent increases in reimbursement rates, a new incentive framework has been established to acknowledge those assuming increased risk in more dangerous environments and those providing rapid deployment of key enabling capabilities. The Secretariat should move quickly to apply those premiums in practice so as not to lose momentum. The Panel believes that the time is right to develop, within the existing

reimbursement system, a framework for reimbursing contributors for the provision of unit capabilities to deliver on a particular task, rather than for the provision of personnel and items of equipment alone. As noted in the report of the Senior Advisory Group on rates of reimbursement to troop-contributing countries and other related issues issued in 2012, such an approach will require clear training, performance and equipment standards for delivering on specific tasks or services (A/C.5/67/10, annex, para. 91). The development of performance standards, discussed below, should continue, focusing initially on specialist functions.

212. Recent peacekeeping experience confirms that uniformed female personnel play a vital role in reaching out and gaining the trust of women and girls within local communities, understanding and detecting their unique protection needs and tailoring the responses of peace operations. However, the level of uniformed female personnel deployment remains low, at 3 per cent of military personnel and 10 per cent of police personnel. Those figures reflect the generally low figures of women's participation in national military and police services. Troop- and police-contributing countries should implement their national action plans on Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) or develop such plans, and redouble efforts to increase the number of women serving in the national security sector. The Secretariat should develop a gender-sensitive force and police generation strategy to address the recruitment, retention and advancement of female uniformed personnel, including by exploring such incentives as reimbursement premiums.

213. The Secretariat must fully integrate the human rights screening policy adopted in 2012 into the force generation process. The Panel recalls the responsibilities of Member States to ensure that individual personnel and contingents have not been involved in violations of international human rights law or international humanitarian law. The Secretariat should request from troop- and police-contributing countries up-to-date information regarding relevant national selection and deployment policies and procedures.

Specialist support packages

214. Specialized capacities to provide urgent infrastructure, medical and mobility solutions are the hardest for the United Nations to mobilize through conventional processes. The Panel believes that a system should be established to enable Member States to contribute short- or medium-term specialist capabilities — uniformed or otherwise — to achieve a particular critical output, a time-bound task or a specific service during the mission start-up phase, or essential services during a new phase. Specialist support packages could be dispatched, for example, to repair an airstrip, rehabilitate a key building, port, power facility or other infrastructure essential for the mission, or provide a temporary air bridge or strategic or tactical airlift capacity. Those could be provided as contributions to, or alongside, a mission. Creative administrative support solutions will be needed on the part of the United Nations to facilitate this. "Triangular partnership" arrangements between a troop-contributing country, the Secretariat and a third country providing specialist equipment or resources represent another important model of collaboration for the future. The increased use of "support provider" contingents dedicated to providing, for example, camp services, supply distributions or routine escorts, is another support option that could free up much-needed capacity from infantry and specialist units for their mandate implementation tasks.

215. Medical evacuation capacity is a particularly important requirement. In more dangerous and remote mission settings, missions must deploy anticipating the possibility of casualties from the outset. In this regard, traditional approaches to gradually building up medical capacities are insufficient. Timely and reliable medical evacuation and casualty evacuation should be a priority during the mission start-up phase and must be maintained continuously throughout the life cycle of the mission, including with night flight capability. No mission should be assessed to have reached an initial operating capability unless such arrangements are in place. Clear capability standards should be established for casualty evacuations and medical evacuations.

216. **With respect to mobilizing faster, better capabilities, the Panel recommends that:**

(a) **The Secretariat present options to the Security Council and the General Assembly outlining the reductions in force generation and deployment times that can be achieved by various additional measures or resources;**

(b) **The Security Council provide strong political support to the United Nations force generation process. Whenever military units are authorized, Council members should actively and through all diplomatic channels support the efforts of the Secretary-General to mobilize troops and police. This should be further reinforced through a properly resourced strategic force generation capacity;**

(c) **Members of the Security Council, in particular its permanent members, as well as other Member States with the required capabilities, are encouraged to offer their troops for United Nations operations so as to provide the missions with essential capabilities and to signal their resolve, in particular in support of mandates to protect civilians;**

(d) **The Secretariat seek specialist support packages, both civilian and military, from Member States, drawing on contributions of short-term, task-focused capabilities; and that the further expansion of "triangular partnership" arrangements between troop- and police-contributing countries, the Secretariat and third countries be considered;**

(e) **The Secretariat and the General Assembly should pursue further evolution of reimbursement reforms for troop- and police-contributing countries and, in particular, develop options for reimbursing Member States for a capability rather than simply for current equipment and personnel numbers. The Secretariat should implement existing reimbursement premiums immediately;**

(f) **The Secretariat develop a gender-sensitive force and police generation strategy, including by encouraging troop- and police-contributing countries to develop and/or implement national action plans on Security Council resolution 1325 (2000).**

3. Performance in the field

217. The United Nations has been harshly criticized when its missions fail to perform against reasonable expectations in the field, resulting in reputational damage to the Organization and contributing countries alike. While the majority of United Nations personnel perform well, the few who do not are all too visible, and

there are inadequate measures in place to enhance performance. The performance of military and police personnel is a collective responsibility of Member States and the Secretariat.

218. Enhanced "triangular cooperation" between the Security Council, the Secretariat and troop- and police-contributing countries is an essential opportunity to strengthen performance through a shared understanding of a mandate and the tasks required. That improved engagement should be aimed at building commitment to the purpose of the mission, the concept of operations, the specific requirements of units and the rules of engagement. Thereafter, those who commit personnel do so with a clear understanding of what is expected. Where the situation changes dramatically in the field and new tasks are required of contingents, it is important for the mission leadership to engage contingent commanders on any changes required in their posture and activities and for the Secretariat to do the same with the permanent missions of troop- and police-contributing countries. The United Nations needs to galvanize its efforts to improve capability development and performance by drawing together the Secretariat's ongoing lines of work into a comprehensive framework for the next five years, including:

(a) Measurable, effects-based and performance-focused standards, which are required for the future, with a particular focus on developing performance standards for specialized capabilities, such as medical capabilities;

(b) A structured roll-out, with Member State support, of the United Nations military unit manuals developed with Member States. Similar assistance will be required following the finalization of the United Nations police strategic guidance framework;

(c) Mission-specific statements of unit requirements and guidelines for troop-contributing countries that are dynamic and customized to each mission's requirements so as to avoid template approaches. Such requirements should set a specific capability standard for each unit based on mandate- and country-specific conditions. They should be the basis of the force generation dialogue and be signed along with the guidelines for troop-contributing countries as part of the existing memorandum of understanding;

(d) The establishment of the Office for the Peacekeeping Strategic Partnership within the Departments of Peacekeeping Operations and Field Support, which has supported improved performance dialogue with military and police contributors on a limited set of issues. The Office should be further empowered to cover assessment of performance, and systematic follow-up on corrective measures must be improved;

(e) Predeployment visits to support the preparations of troop- and police-contributing countries for deployment, which should be conducted more systematically, using the unit requirements as the basis, to support contributors in providing the right training, equipment and other readiness in place. Regular operational assessments of units should be undertaken in the field, in addition to equipment inspections;

(f) A strengthened system for the review of cases of non-performance, particularly in the context of the protections of civilians mandate. All cases of non-performance of orders should be reviewed, with a formal report on accountabilities;

(g) Improved systems for information management and analysis.

219. Performance is a leadership and command responsibility. Mission leadership must set clear expectations and, when required, the head of mission must work with Headquarters to raise performance issues with the permanent missions of troop- and police-contributing countries. Consistent underperformers must be warned officially and repatriated if they fail to improve. Commitment to dealing with performance issues should be reflected in the individual performance records of all managers and commanders in the field and at Headquarters.

220. The ability of field commanders to ensure performance is severely hampered, however, by the use of caveats and national controls. It is essential that the Secretariat weigh the specific caveats when a contingent is offered against the value of its deployment, and it must be willing to decline an offer if the caveats will impede performance. In the field, any further caveats beyond those national constraints accepted at the outset cannot be condoned. United Nations Headquarters should be advised of any such restrictions when decisions should be taken regarding the viability of a contingent's continued deployment. Force commanders and police commissioners should record instances of failure to follow orders and report those to Headquarters when they occur, with a full summary provided regularly.

221. Timely, high-quality and actionable information is central to effective performance. The United Nations has long grappled with the challenges of improving its tactical information systems to provide good situational awareness and a common operational picture. Missions suffer from reporting overload, and yet the sum of that reporting often fails to yield the necessary information and analysis. The Panel firmly believes that the United Nations Secretariat needs to overhaul the functioning of information and analysis structures and systems within missions in order to deliver significantly streamlined reporting, more effective information management and significantly enhanced analytical capacities. This can be complemented by low-cost but effective tools to support situational awareness and analysis within the mission area. The Panel calls upon all Member States, including host Governments, to share any information that may relate to the security of United Nations personnel.

222. **With respect to capability development and performance of uniformed capabilities, the Panel recommends that:**

(a) **The Secretariat, with Member States, integrate existing initiatives into a single coherent capability and performance development framework;**

(b) **To reinforce command and control:**

(i) **The selection of forces for deployment in peacekeeping missions explicitly take into account any national caveats in determining whether to proceed with the deployment of a contingent;**

(ii) **Any additional caveats beyond those accepted by the Secretariat at the outset not be tolerated, and missions must communicate those to the Secretariat;**

(iii) **Force commanders and police commissioners record instances of failure to follow orders and report those to Headquarters;**

(c) **When situations change suddenly and a new level of performance is required in the field, the Secretariat explain the changed requirements clearly to the troop- and police-contributing countries and mission leadership take similar measures with contingents;**

(d) **The Secretariat review reporting and information management processes in field missions to produce timely, high-quality and actionable information and to reduce the reporting burden.**

4. Mobility and flexible support

223. A critical enabler of more mobile and responsive uniformed capabilities is an effective logistics support system attuned to the operating environment. Without it, personnel cannot be adequately deployed, sustained or extracted. In contemporary peace operations, United Nations logistics systems and structures in the field are under severe strain. Equipment and supply standards and self-sustainment requirements are misaligned with today's realities. Civilian logistics supply lines struggle to support more dispersed operations where, lacking the needed mobility, ever-smaller teams are stretched across large areas of operations. Endemic difficulties, including slow recruitment and deployment, the lack of reliable standby capacities, the absence of interoperable units and national caveats, compound the challenges. Restrictive budgets exacerbate them further. Under current constraints, the system is being pushed to, and at times beyond, its limits. It is essential that operational and logistical support concepts be fully synchronized to ensure that mission concepts of operations in high-tempo and insecure environments are realistic.

224. Member States and the Secretariat need to define a new United Nations logistical support model for the future that would enable greater tactical responsiveness in large, austere and insecure settings. This would likely place greater reliance on military enabling assets and logistics, as well as the specialized support capabilities described in paragraphs 214 and 215. That dialogue should also take into consideration recent innovations in delivering services through commercial providers or the United Nations Office for Project Services, and enhanced performance-based commercial contracts. A clear alternative vision to the status quo is required in order to assess the required changes, as well as the cost implications and required accountability controls. That dialogue should inform the next meeting of the Working Group on Contingent-Owned Equipment, so that equipment-related issues could be taken up at that session.

225. In parallel, the Secretariat and Member States should address several pressing concerns that constrain greater mobility in field operations today. Existing policy approaches and practices on accommodation standards and the use of military aircraft should be reviewed and updated to support more mobile operations. Member States and the Secretariat should agree on a clear definition of accommodation standards to minimize reliance on hard-walled accommodation, which significantly slows down deployment and restricts mobility.

226. The use of military aircraft, an expensive and hard-to-mobilize resource, is not always maximized. In the light of the demands of contemporary missions, the Secretariat should identify and remove constraints on the use of military aircraft, particularly for operational and medical emergencies, through the amendment of its Aviation Operational Risk Management Policy and a review of the application of International Civil Aviation Organization and other rules to military assets in

demanding operating environments. Force commanders should have increased direct tasking authority for military utility helicopters when the mission concept of operations requires it, and where there is a need. Letters of assist should be reviewed with the concerned Member States to allow for rapid short-term redeployments of military air assets in support of operational requirements.

227. Enhanced coordination of support resources across missions should be pursued with a view to delivering more flexible and efficient operational results, particularly where there are concentrations of missions today, such as in Central and East Africa, West Africa and the Middle East. Efforts to establish regional supply chain networks for logistics support to missions, and improved transport and movement coordination between missions, represent important opportunities to modernize peace operations. Such efforts should be supported at all levels in missions, at United Nations Headquarters and among Member States.

228. The Panel calls for strengthened collaboration between the uniformed and substantive components of missions and the mission support components. Unnecessary formalism, process and bureaucracy should give way to a new commitment to putting in place streamlined processes and more transparent procedures and decision-making, thus improving accountability for results while safeguarding resources. That commitment should be supported at United Nations Headquarters and by Member States in line with the proposals in section III.D.1, Responsive, accountable and field-focused support.

229. **With respect to ensuring more agile field support, the Panel recommends that:**

(a) **Member States be encouraged to work with the Secretariat to develop a future logistical support model for United Nations missions operating in insecure, high-tempo operating environments, which allows for greater tactical mobility and military control over enabling assets;**

(b) **The Secretariat and Member States revisit accommodation standards to permit greater tactical mobility and remove military aviation constraints to enable more mobile operations, and continue to pursue with Member States greater use of coordinated movement planning and the establishment of regional supply chain networks wherever practicable.**

5. A global training partnership

230. With 106,000 uniformed personnel from 121 contributing countries deployed in the field, training should be a major priority for United Nations peace operations, yet training is significantly underresourced. The United Nations should serve as a central point in coordinating a stronger global training partnership. Several essential building blocks are in place with the Integrated Training Service of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Member State-led groups, such as the International Association of Peacekeeping Training Centres. The Secretariat has proposed a new training architecture for peace operations, which will require further deepening of the partnership among Member States with more coordination from the centre. The United Nations training system relies on Member States delivering their own training, yet capacities to deliver vary enormously. A deepened global training partnership should be based on a sound training certification system that can help Member States to match support from those with resources to those that lack the capacity to

undertake predeployment training to United Nations standards. The Panel believes that the Secretariat should play an enhanced role in guiding that effort in support of Member States: the Integrated Training Service should establish a small certification and partnerships capacity for the management of such a training partnership.

231. The Secretariat should assist Member States in updating their training on the "new basics" required of peacekeepers in more challenging settings, including night patrolling, convoy security procedures, counter-improvised explosive device and counter-ambush training, police and military interoperability training, and joint exercises for formed police units and military contingents. This should be done in close collaboration with regional organization trainers to ensure that resources are maximized. A junior commanders training course is also recommended, given the significant expectations of such officers in decentralized peace operations. The training courses delivered by Member States, including through the "mobile training teams" concept, should be regularly updated on the basis of priorities identified by force commanders and troop-contributing countries and supported by more reliable resourcing.

232. Gender issues and human rights should be integrated into all relevant training modules, including those for senior managers, and should be incorporated into the certification system. Mandatory induction training in missions should incorporate context-specific and scenario-based gender training and should adequately reflect the human rights responsibilities of all personnel.

233. **With respect to strengthening training partnerships, the Panel recommends that:**

(a) **The Secretariat support Member States in establishing a strong global training partnership based on a training certification system to help to target limited resources among Member States;**

(b) **Training efforts should increasingly target the "new basics" of United Nations peacekeeping in more difficult environments and focus on operational shortfalls that affect security and effectiveness in the field. Mobile training teams should be strengthened to help to deliver this enhanced training effort.**

C. Putting policy into practice

1. Strengthening global-regional partnerships

234. The drafters of the Charter were prescient when they included the role of regional arrangements in Chapter VIII.[15] Regional entities have emerged progressively as important and significant actors with considerable influence over conflict dynamics and regional politics. Although United Nations peace operations have long collaborated with regional entities, the United Nations should now strengthen such partnerships and embrace their changing dimensions as part of an increasingly global and regional peace and security architecture. The recent report

[15] Article 52 of the Charter provides: "Nothing in the present Charter precludes the existence of regional arrangements or agencies for dealing with such matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security as are appropriate for regional action provided that such arrangements or agencies and their activities are consistent with the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations."

of the Secretary-General entitled "Partnering for peace: moving towards partnership peacekeeping" (S/2015/229) provides a clear commitment to building pragmatic and principled partnerships, which must be pursued.

235. As discussed previously in paragraphs 53 to 58, the Panel is convinced of the need for the United Nations to craft a collective vision for a future global and regional architecture to maintain international peace and security. That vision should leverage comparative advantages and establish mutual obligations between the United Nations and regional organizations. Although this will be a long-term process, it should begin now, and with a compelling vision for the future of international crisis management and response. The United Nations has an essential role in guiding the development of such a framework to support the realization of the Charter's purposes and principles and to provide the Security Council with additional instruments with which to respond to crises in the future.

236. The Panel believes that it is the role of the Secretary-General to begin building a consensus for such a vision and to propose a road map to realize it over the next decade. The Security Council has an essential role to play in realizing that vision through its evolving relationship with the governing bodies of regional organizations. The United Nations Secretariat should build on its knowledge of and relationships with regional partners and strengthen collaboration with them in assessing evolving conflicts and planning new missions wherever relevant. United Nations missions and envoys in the field should adopt a collaborative approach with regional partners to build operational partnerships.

237. The role of the United Nations Office to the African Union in strengthening the United Nations-African Union partnership at the policy, institutional and operational levels is a salient example of what can be achieved. Strong relationships have also been established with various European institutions and Member States in Europe through the United Nations Liaison Office for Peace and Security in Brussels. A liaison function to the League of Arab States should be established within the regional office for preventive diplomacy for North Africa and West Asia proposed in paragraph 69, and partnerships should be strengthened with other regional organizations as appropriate.

238. **With respect to expanding regional partnerships, the Panel recommends that the Secretary-General establish a liaison function to the League of Arab States within the proposed regional office for preventive diplomacy for North Africa and West Asia. The Secretary-General should establish liaison arrangements with other regional organizations as appropriate.**

Strategic partnership in Africa

239. Even as a broader vision is elaborated, the United Nations should move ahead with regional partners where there is interest and capacity to forge a strong partnership, as is the case with the African Union today. The centrality of Africa for United Nations peace operations is evident: 62.5 per cent of United Nations peace operations and 87 per cent of all uniformed United Nations peacekeepers are in Africa, and more than 80 per cent of the annual peacekeeping budget is spent on missions in Africa. Over the past decade, the African Union and its regional economic communities and regional mechanisms have worked towards a coherent continental peace and security architecture, including in building the African

Standby Force and the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises for the future.

240. Recent experience of the African Union and the regional economic communities and regional mechanisms in, for instance, the Central African Republic, Mali and Somalia has demonstrated the increasing capability, reliability and assertiveness of African forces serving under the African Union flag. That experience shows that troops from regional and neighbouring countries are essential as first responders and often bring political commitment, understanding of the context and a direct link to regional political influence and leverage. Yet, as many in the region itself have cautioned, there are also potential political risks to regional engagement in managing conflict situations where national interests of neighbouring countries may not be compatible with the intended direction of peace efforts.

241. The United Nations-African Union partnership has come a long way over the past decade. Several innovative mission-specific ad hoc collaborations have taken place in the Central African Republic, Mali, Somalia and the Sudan (Darfur). Joint prevention efforts have been successful in West Africa and elsewhere. Such operational engagements have been supported through the United Nations Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme and the technical assistance and political support provided by the United Nations Office to the African Union, as well as the support of the European Union and other Member States partners of the African Union.

242. The United Nations and the Peace and Security Council and the Commission of the African Union should approach the partnership as a strategic tool of real value to all organizations. Recognizing the primacy of the Security Council for matters of international peace and security, they should define evolving and complementary roles that bring to bear the combined capacities, influence and experience of each organization in ensuring a coherent response in each context. This requires not just changes in form but also in approach and attitude, wherein the organizations recognize that they have distinct comparative advantages that, when leveraged together, can address shared problems more effectively.

243. The United Nations-African Union strategic partnership should be underpinned by the following principles of cooperation, which may also serve as a baseline set of principles for other United Nations engagements with regional organizations in future: consultative decision-making and common strategy; the division of labour based on respective comparative advantage; joint analysis, planning, monitoring and evaluation; integrated response to the conflict cycle, including prevention; and transparency, accountability and respect for international standards.

244. The relationship between the United Nations Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council should be further strengthened through increased regular and meaningful interaction and consultation to develop a shared understanding of conflicts and shape common strategies in response. Based on a comprehensive analysis of the comparative advantages of each organization in the preventive and response contexts, such strategies should set out the division of the roles and responsibilities of the United Nations, the African Union and the regional economic communities and regional mechanisms. This is even more essential during the planning phase of a peace operation. Where a United Nations peace operation is expected to follow an African Union-led operation, benchmarks should be identified early to ensure an effective transition.

245. The United Nations Secretariat and the African Union Commission, together with the regional economic communities and regional mechanisms, should cooperate regarding the prevention of potential conflict as early as possible, including perhaps through an annual joint horizon-scanning exercise. They should develop a shared analysis of existing and emerging threats to peace and security early and undertake joint planning of responses that reflect the most appropriate role and responsibilities for each organization, including leadership and support roles in mediation efforts. Coordination mechanisms should facilitate strategic coherence between the various organizations' presence and operations in country.

246. The Panel heard criticism regarding the unwillingness of the United Nations Security Council to provide logistical and other support to the African Union missions in Mali and the Central African Republic, both deployed under its authority, in the same way that it is supporting the African Union Mission in Somalia. The African Union argues that, when it intervenes in conflict and crisis situations, it does so on behalf of the United Nations Security Council and that therefore the United Nations has a duty to provide United Nations-assessed contributions. Others contend that the Security Council cannot accept the obligation to fund every operation that it authorizes. Nevertheless, it is clear that the lack of sustained, predictable and flexible funding mechanisms to support African Union peace support operations undermines their sustainability and effectiveness, which in turn has an impact on the effectiveness of United Nations peace operations when they take over.

247. The Panel recognizes the African Union's commitment and the steps that it has taken to increase its members' assessed contributions to African Union peace support operations and to seek alternative financing sources for that purpose. It encourages further efforts in this regard. The Panel also notes the Secretary-General's plans to undertake a joint lessons learned exercise with the African Union to review and assess the various mechanisms available to improve the predictability, sustainability and flexibility of financing for African Union peace operations authorized by the Security Council. That joint exercise should be an opportunity to advance that goal.

248. The Panel recalls the recommendations in the report of the African Union-United Nations panel on modalities for support to African Union peacekeeping operations (Prodi report) of 2008 (see A/63/666-S/2008/813) and recommends the use of United Nations-assessed contributions on a case-by-case basis to support African Union peace support operations authorized by the Security Council, including the costs associated with deployed uniformed personnel. This should complement funding from the African Union and/or African Member States. Any African Union peace support operation receiving United Nations-assessed contributions should also receive necessary support from the Department of Field Support of the United Nations Secretariat and its service centres as required.

249. **With respect to the strategic partnership in Africa, the Panel recommends that:**

(a) **The use of United Nations-assessed contributions be provided on a case-by-case basis to support African Union peace support operations authorized by the Security Council, including the costs associated with deployed uniformed personnel to complement funding from the African Union and/or African Member States;**

(b) **Any African Union peace support operation receiving United Nations-assessed contributions should provide regular reports to the Security Council, as well as appropriate financial reporting to the Organization, and comply fully with United Nations standards, such as the human rights due diligence policy and United Nations conduct and discipline frameworks;**

(c) **The United Nations-African Union strategic partnership should be underpinned by the following principles of cooperation, which may also serve as a baseline set of principles for United Nations engagements with other regional organizations in future: consultative decision-making and common strategy; the division of labour based on respective comparative advantage; joint analysis, planning, monitoring and evaluation; integrated response to the conflict cycle, including prevention; and transparency, accountability and respect for international standards.**

2. Engaging communities

250. Many post-conflict settings are characterized by transitional political arrangements, weak political parties and elite-dominated peace processes. By working in partnership with the local population and, where appropriate, acting as a bridge between local communities and host authorities, United Nations peace operations can help to facilitate more inclusive political processes that address social cohesion, inequalities and marginalization and contribute to a more sustainable peace.

251. In this context, it is important for United Nations peace operations to recognize that conflict often has multiple local manifestations and is experienced differently across populations. It is essential that peace operations understand local conflict dynamics, by regularly engaging with local populations.

252. Many United Nations peace operations already work closely with local populations and communities. They support local conflict resolution initiatives, strengthen civil society platforms and provide some support to communities through quick-impact projects. In addition, some peace operations have recently introduced innovative tools, including local perception surveys on the role and impact of the peace operation. National staff in political affairs, civil affairs, human rights and protection, electoral, public information and other components play a crucial role in expanding the reach and depth of peace operations, often on the "front line" of a mission's work. In some cases, national staff working as community liaison assistants in United Nations military bases help contingents to engage with the local population on the protection of civilians and other mandates.

253. United Nations peace operations, however, continue to face a number of challenges to more effective engagement with the local population. First, peace operations are often deployed to cover a vast terrain, making it difficult to gain access to a dispersed population. Second, it can be challenging to identify representatives who genuinely speak on behalf of the local population. There is thus a tendency to engage with a small network of people who speak English or French and use jargon familiar to the international community but who may lack a local base. Third, it is not always clear how peace operations can help civil society to contribute to the political process. Many so-called national consultative processes are neither national in reach nor truly consultative in character. Fourth, peace

operations' engagement with civil society organizations may raise concerns with the host Government, unless those relationships are carried out with transparency.

254. Several local community actors and civil society representatives expressed the view to the Panel that they found it difficult to interact with United Nations personnel, who appeared remote and aloof. They noted that peacekeepers often lacked training on how to deal with traumatized people and that communication challenges were often compounded by language barriers. Some expressed concern that peace operations did not spend enough time understanding existing capacities for peace and protection or conflict mitigation mechanisms and simply replaced local structures with exogenous ones.

255. Peace operations have some way to go to create strong channels of communication with local populations. They should move beyond merely consulting the local population to actively include it in their work. Each peace operation should work closely with the United Nations country team and the local communities, including civil society actors, to develop strategies for community engagement at various stages of the mission cycle. In developing its strategy, each mission should have access to the requisite local, cultural, linguistic and country expertise. The strategy should include the creation of forums in which senior mission leadership can participate in structured, regular engagement with local communities, including women, youth, religious and other leaders who can provide feedback to the mission on its work. Resources should be identified for the periodic commissioning of independent surveys of local perceptions of the mission and progress towards mission objectives. Local perspectives should be streamlined into the consideration of political strategy and be used in formal and informal decision-making. Local engagement and feedback should also be used to measure the impact of the mission and is particularly important to ensure that the mission does no harm or makes immediate course corrections as required. United Nations Volunteers, who already play a crucial role, could be more effectively enlisted in strengthening engagement with national actors and local communities across mission mandates and assisting in national capacity development.

256. **With respect to engaging communities, the Panel recommends that:**

(a) **Missions develop strategies for community engagement at various stages of the mission cycle, including assessment, analysis, planning, implementation, review and evaluation, and make increasing use of the resources of national staff in designing and implementing those strategies;**

(b) **The Secretariat work closely with the United Nations Volunteers programme to further integrate United Nations Volunteers into the community liaison efforts of missions, including through their greater use across occupational groups, and to further develop local capacities.**

3. Implementation of the women and peace and security agenda

257. Despite a robust normative framework for the advancement of women and peace and security, many impediments stand in the way of the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and the six successive resolutions. Chief among them is the lack of national leadership in making the women and peace and security agenda a national political and governance priority. The following

challenges, among others, limit the full implementation of the agenda by United Nations peace operations:

(a) There is a prevailing erroneous notion that women and peace and security is "a woman's issue" that can be addressed only by women, instead of being understood as a peace and security issue for men and women and for society as a whole;

(b) The specific experience, rights, needs and roles of women and girls in conflict situations are often not included in preliminary analysis and assessments and thus do not feed into concrete strategies for the design of missions and the formulation of mandates;

(c) The "gender issue" is too often routinely assigned to staff in gender units, instead of integrated into all relevant functional units;

(d) There is an absence of sufficient policy, substantive and technical capacity to support the gender work of missions, both within missions and at Headquarters;

(e) The lack of mission funding to support gender-related activities limits the capacity to engage effectively with the local population, especially women and girls;

(f) There is an uneven commitment to the agenda at the most senior levels and within the ranks of all mission personnel, both civilian and uniformed, and at Headquarters, and a failure to understand the integration of gender and the advancement of the women and peace and security agenda as a responsibility of all staff;

(g) Outreach to women leaders and women's civil society organizations, especially at the senior mission level, is often irregular or informal. This is a critical missed opportunity to engage women in contributing to the work of the mission. By failing to work closely with women. a mission forfeits the opportunity to contribute to their capacity as partners and leaders when the mission leaves;

(h) Despite annual debates on women and peace and security of the Security Council, there is inconsistent application of the agenda during the rest of the year, including during mandate formulation and renewal consultations, which is exacerbated by the lack of attention to those issues in briefings and reports to the Council by the Secretariat and senior mission leaders.

258. Gender-sensitive analysis should be conducted throughout the mission planning, mandate development, implementation, review and mission drawdown processes. This requires that the analysis and planning capacity called for in paragraph 173 and missions have the requisite gender and conflict analysis capability and draw upon expertise from local women leaders, women's organizations, relevant United Nations entities and other partners.

259. Gender expertise should be integrated into all mission functional components that require gender knowledge and experience. The Senior Gender Adviser should be located in the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and report directly to the Special Representative. Working closely with the heads of mission components and the gender expertise in the various components, the Senior Gender Adviser should be responsible for advising the Special Representative and

senior mission leadership at the strategic level on integrating a gender perspective into mission activities, including in the planning and conduct of analyses, advisory services in mission components and formulating and monitoring the mission-wide women and peace and security action plan. The Senior Gender Adviser should also promote the advancement of women in peace negotiation strategies, as well as in public outreach and the achievement of gender-specific outcomes of the mission.

260. Given the role of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) in leading and coordinating the work of the United Nations system on gender equality, United Nations peace operations should have full access to policy, substantive and technical support on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) from UN-Women, as well as the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Sufficient mission programmatic funding should be provided to facilitate the implementation of the mission's gender-sensitive activities, including supporting the participation and partnership of local women in mission activities and in peace processes. Missions should work closely with the United Nations country team and other partners with access to programmatic funding to support prioritized implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and successive resolutions.

261. In order to strengthen accountability for the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda, the compact between the Secretary-General and heads of mission should incorporate three gender-related indicators: (a) commitment to promoting gender mainstreaming across all mandated tasks; (b) commitment to encouraging national leaders to take ownership of the women and peace and security agenda; and (c) commitment to increasing gender parity among staff. Secretariat officials and special representatives and special envoys of the Secretary-General should routinely include in their briefings and reports to the Security Council the differentiated impact of conflict on women and girls, as well as analysis of successes, challenges, failures and recommendations to address deficits in implementing Council resolution 1325 (2000) and successive resolutions. The Council should, in turn, engage more regularly with women and men from affected communities to better understand and respond to the specific gender concerns of conflict situations and ensure increased, sustained attention to issues regarding women and peace and security in all relevant thematic areas.

262. **With respect to implementing the women and peace and security agenda, the Panel recommends that:**

(a) **The Secretariat and missions carry out gender-sensitive analysis throughout the analysis, planning, implementation, review, evaluation and mission drawdown processes;**

(b) **Missions integrate gender expertise within all functional components requiring gender knowledge and experience. The mission's Senior Gender Adviser should be located in the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, reporting directly to the Special Representative and advising him or her and senior mission leadership at the strategic level on integrating a gender perspective into mission activities;**

(c) **Missions have full access to policy, substantive and technical support from UN-Women on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and successive resolutions, together with support currently received**

from the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations;

(d) **The Secretariat ensure that compacts between the Secretary-General and heads of mission specify performance indicators relating to gender.**

4. Integrating human rights into United Nations peace operations

263. The essential contributions that a human rights approach can make to the prevention of conflict and to sustaining peace, as well as the role of mission human rights components in the protection of civilians, have been set out, inter alia, in paragraphs 76, 77, 84, 87, 88, 126, 157 and 232 of the present report.

264. Substantial progress has been achieved regarding the integration of human rights into peacekeeping operations and political missions over the past 15 years. This includes the integration of human rights into policy, guidance and training for uniformed and civilian staff. Dedicated and sizeable human rights staffing is included in all integrated peace operations, and human rights expertise is often, but not yet always, included in the assessments and planning process for the establishment and review of peace operations.

265. There remain areas, however, in which further improvement should be achieved. Resources for the deployment of human rights officers are not routinely included in the initial commitment authority for new missions, thus delaying their deployment in mission start-up at a critical time. The backstopping of human rights components and support to special envoys also requires strengthening and reliable funding. In addition, although the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Field Support and the Department of Political Affairs adopted a joint policy on public human rights in United Nations peace operations and special political missions in 2011, implementation of public reporting on human rights should be more fully reflected in the work of all peace operations with human rights mandates. Senior mission leadership and Secretariat officials should include key human rights developments when briefing and reporting to the Security Council or otherwise engaging with Member States, and there should be regular public reporting on the human rights situation.

266. Monitoring and reporting of human rights issues in peace operations is often dispersed and fragmented. This has sometimes resulted in overlapping structures, competing requests for resources and duplication of activities, such as where multiple sections of a mission may be engaged in monitoring and reporting and interviewing survivors, thus contributing to the lack of a coordinated strategic approach to address human rights issues. While strong advocacy to host authorities and Member States on child protection and sexual violence is essential and specialist expertise should be included in mission staffing in accordance with the context, overall monitoring and reporting on human rights and the protection of civilians should be coherent and reporting requirements streamlined.

267. **With respect to integrating human rights into peace operations, the Panel recommends that:**

(a) **The Secretariat seek resources from the initial commitment authority for new missions to allow for the timely recruitment and deployment of human rights and protection-related personnel. Sufficient resources should also be**

available to ensure the backstopping of the human rights components of missions and to support special envoys;

(b) **Mission management arrangements ensure coherence and avoid duplication of effort among human rights and protection functions and monitoring and reporting requirements and schedules for the specialized protection mandates be streamlined.**

5. Leadership

268. Throughout the Panel's consultations, all partners and stakeholders identified the quality of leadership as one of the most crucial factors in the success or failure of United Nations peace operations. The best United Nations leaders are remembered for their courage, vision, integrity, humility and ability to inspire others. The Panel recognizes the work undertaken by the Secretariat to enhance the process for identifying and selecting heads and deputy heads of mission, as well as some improvements to provide senior mission leaders with induction, training and support, including mentoring. Those efforts notwithstanding, there has not been a quantum improvement in the appointment of high-quality senior mission leaders, in particular heads and deputy heads of mission, capable of effectively leading and managing today's United Nations peace operations.

269. Recognizing that no individual can meet all the demands of mission leadership, the Panel strongly supports ongoing efforts to select strong leadership teams with diversity and complementarity of talents, competencies, experience and skills. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General should participate in the interview and selection process of other senior mission leadership, including his or her deputies, the Force Commander, the Police Commissioner and the Director of Mission Support. The core leadership team of newly authorized missions should be assembled as early as possible in order to enable their participation in mission planning and building the team.

270. Increasingly volatile environments can test the mettle of mission leadership teams, no matter how well prepared or fit for the task. The mismatch between the demands in the field and the responsibilities entrusted to heads of missions in large and insecure missions on the one hand, and the limited authority that mission leaders are given over the management of resources combined with the lack of preparation and capacity development of some leaders on the other, is at times considerable. The factors undermining the selection and preparation of leaders of United Nations peace operations today include: (a) lack of consistent application of a merit-based selection process for the highest level of mission leaders; (b) the challenge of identifying both strong political and managerial skill sets, which are equally needed for effective mandate implementation; (c) insufficient gender and geographic representation among senior mission leaders; (d) poor induction for newly appointed senior mission leaders; (e) weak performance management systems; and (f) failure to grow the capacity of junior and mid-level staff and national staff with leadership potential.

271. The Secretary-General's independence in the selection and appointment of senior leadership should be reinforced through the consistent application of a clearly defined, merit-based selection process, with full regard to gender and geographical balance. Every effort should be made to review, select and appoint individuals to vacant posts on the basis of a solid analysis of the mission leadership team, mandate,

specific post profile and competencies so that appointments more closely reflect the needs on the ground. The outcome of such assessment processes should form a central part of the Secretary-General's appointment decision. Member States should share profiles of highly qualified and capable women and men from fields not confined to their diplomatic services to serve in senior leadership positions, recognizing the demands of challenging field deployments. The Secretariat should strengthen existing assessment methods for screening candidates prior to selection to assess political judgement and managerial skills. The Secretary-General should establish an ad hoc independent group of former senior field leaders to hold informal discussions with potential candidates for mission leadership, ensure that they understand the requirements and demands of the role and advise him or her on their suitability to be considered for mission leadership, prior to formal Secretariat interviews.

272. As at 31 December 2014, women made up 29 per cent of all Professional staff in United Nations peace operations. The proportion of Professional women in the field decreases steadily from 41 per cent at the P-2 level to 13 per cent at the Assistant Secretary-General level (see table). The Panel recognizes that the Secretary-General has made significant efforts to respond to the institutional challenges of gender parity within the Organization through the appointment of women as heads of mission. However, as at 31 December 2014, with 6 out of 27 positions encumbered, women accounted for 22 per cent of the total number of heads of peace operations.

Staff in the Professional and higher categories in United Nations peace operations, by gender (31 December 2014)

	Female		*Male*	
Grade	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*
USG	5	28	13	72
ASG	5	13	34	87
D-2	8	16	43	84
D-1	30	24	97	76
P-5	93	25	277	75
P-4	248	28	635	72
P-3	352	31	801	69
P-2	95	41	138	59

Abbreviations: ASG, Assistant Secretary-General; USG, Under-Secretary-General.

273. The broad geographic representation required of a universal organization remains poor, including at the senior leadership levels of United Nations peace operations, and particularly so for women. The underrepresentation of women is more pronounced for women from Member States in the regional groups of Africa, Asia-Pacific, Eastern Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean. Men from Western Europe and other States and from Africa comprise approximately 40 per cent of staff at the P-2 level in peace operations. That figure rises to approximately 60 per cent of the encumbered level of heads of mission posts.

274. The Secretary-General should continue to appoint more women to senior mission leadership positions, both from within and outside the Organization. The obstacles and structural factors preventing women's recruitment and professional advancement beyond the P-5, D-1 and D-2 levels, as noted above, should be reviewed. Measures should be designed to support the promotion of serving female staff to senior leadership roles, including through mentoring programmes, and the recruitment of new female staff. The Secretary-General should broaden the geographic representation of women and men at the senior mission leadership level.

275. An obligatory professional induction programme should be developed for new mission leaders on managerial, administrative and substantive aspects. It should identify support available from United Nations departments, agencies, funds and programmes. It should be complemented by a follow-on mentoring programme.

276. The Secretary-General should ensure that those leading United Nations peace operations are held accountable. The performance management of heads of mission should be strengthened, including through "360-degree appraisals", in addition to the compact between the Secretary-General and heads of mission. Evaluations should examine criteria, including mission management skills and the fulfilment of their responsibilities to promote human rights and advance gender equality. The results should be considered in the extension of assignments and consideration for future field assignments. Staff opinion surveys should also be undertaken on an annual basis to identify, address and measure progress in mission management, including leadership.

277. To strengthen its internal management cadre, the Secretary-General should reconsider the "non-reversion" policy, whereby staff at the D-2 level are asked to relinquish the right to return to their parent United Nations organization when assuming head and deputy head of mission positions at the Under-Secretary-General and Assistant Secretary-General levels for a limited duration. The Secretariat should identify staff with the potential for senior mission leadership at the mid-level and provide them with developmental assignments in missions or headquarters posts, together with access to training programmes, at which their performance is assessed.

278. **With respect to leadership, the Panel recommends that:**

(a) **The Secretary-General:**

(i) **Ensure that the selection and appointment of senior leadership is reinforced through the consistent application of a defined, merit-based selection process;**

(ii) **Establish an ad hoc independent group of former senior field leaders to advise the Secretary-General on the suitability of potential candidates for senior mission leadership positions;**

(iii) **Select strong leadership teams based on diversity and complementarity of talents, experience and skills closely reflecting the needs on the ground;**

(iv) **Continue to appoint more women to senior mission leadership positions;**

(v) Review the obstacles and structural factors preventing women's recruitment and professional advancement and support the promotion of serving female staff to senior leadership roles;

(vi) Broaden the geographic representation of senior mission leaders;

(b) The Secretary-General establish an obligatory professional induction programme for new mission leaders, complemented by a follow-on mentoring programme;

(c) The Secretary-General ensure that those leading United Nations peace operations are held accountable, including through such performance management mechanisms as "360-degree appraisals";

(d) To strengthen the United Nations internal management cadre, the Secretary-General:

(i) Reconsider the "non-reversion" policy;

(ii) Support the development of United Nations staff at the mid-level with the potential for senior mission leadership.

6. Addressing abuse and enhancing accountability

279. When a peace operation deploys, it does so with government consent, but it must earn the trust and support of the people. United Nations personnel, whether civilian, police or military, and those associated with or otherwise providing services to the United Nations must live up to the highest standards of conduct, integrity and accountability. Cases of sexual exploitation and abuse, including transactional sex, mean that some United Nations personnel cause harm to some of those whom they are sent to serve and protect. It undermines the work of United Nations peace operations and their acceptance among the local population. Sexual exploitation and abuse damages the reputation of all United Nations personnel, the vast majority of whom perform their duties with professionalism and discipline. Even isolated failures haunt the Organization as a whole, which was founded on the principles of solidarity, humanity and mutual respect.

280. Since 2005, efforts have been made to strengthen conduct and discipline within peace operations, particularly through the establishment of the integrated conduct and discipline framework in 2012 and the work of the conduct and discipline teams. Commitments to maintaining the highest standards of conduct and discipline are included in the compacts of heads of mission and heads of departments, with related performance indicators.

281. Yet 10 years after the United Nations began systematically addressing the issue of sexual exploitation and abuse in peacekeeping operations, serious deficiencies persist. In 2013, an independent team of experts found "a culture of enforcement avoidance" in four missions. Local communities are frequently uninformed as to the procedures for reporting incidents of misconduct by United Nations personnel and the measures taken by the mission to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse. Responsibilities for both prevention and enforcement are dispersed at the mission level, at United Nations Headquarters and, for allegations against military and police personnel, at national capitals. The current system for the Secretariat to follow up with Member States regarding disciplinary or legal action taken in such cases remains weak. Secretariat requests often remain

unanswered by Member States. In other cases, Member States provide delayed or insufficient information. For civilian staff allegations, internal investigations are lengthy, averaging 16 months between 2008 and 2013.[16] There is no comprehensive, systematic and adequately resourced programme to provide assistance to individual victims or the children born as a result of sexual exploitation and abuse. All of those grave shortcomings have a severe impact on the ability of victims to seek justice and to see it being done by the United Nations.

282. The Panel recommends urgent and robust implementation of the measures set out in the report of the Secretary-General on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse for 2014 (A/69/779) to strengthen accountability for sexual exploitation and abuse at all levels through: (a) the establishment by the Secretary-General of immediate response teams to gather and preserve evidence of sexual exploitation and abuse for use in investigations, and which may be called to support investigations dispatched by a troop-contributing country, as well as judicial authorities in the host State; and (b) the completion by both the Secretariat and Member States of investigations into alleged sexual exploitation and abuse within six months of their being reported.

283. The Panel strongly supports the Secretary-General's proposed set of sanctions and administrative measures for all categories of personnel, which include dismissal and repatriation of personnel without the possibility of further service within the United Nations system. The Panel also supports proposals for withholding entitlements from staff members who are dismissed for sexual exploitation and abuse. The Panel further supports suspending the portion of payments due to troop- or police-contributing countries in connection with a specific individual suspected of sexual exploitation and abuse on the basis of credible evidence, from the time that the troop- or police-contributing country is notified of an incident until the completion of its participation in an investigation, noting that the suspended payments will be returned to the Member State if, after an investigation, the allegations are not substantiated. Peace operations and Headquarters must ensure transparency and regularity in reporting on conduct and discipline issues, including to host populations and personnel.

284. Immunity must not mean impunity. Immunity was never intended and does not apply to provide immunity from prosecution to United Nations personnel alleged to have committed sexual exploitation and abuse; the immunity privileges are functional, that is, related to the exercise of his or her professional duty as a United Nations employee.

285. The Panel strongly believes that Member States, in particular troop-contributing countries that have exclusive criminal jurisdiction over the members of their contingents, must immediately and vigorously investigate and prosecute all credible allegations of misconduct and crime, especially sexual violence involving rape and minors, referred to them or brought to their attention, in a manner consistent with international human rights law, including the right to due process.

[16] Office of Internal Oversight Services, "Evaluation of the enforcement and remedial assistance efforts for sexual exploitation and abuse by the United Nations and related personnel in peacekeeping operations", Evaluation report (Assignment No. IED-15-001), 15 May 2015.

286. Member States must report to the Secretariat, on a proactive, timely and systematic basis, on the status of investigations, including prosecution and disciplinary actions taken. The Secretariat should include such information, by contributing country, in the Secretary-General's report, noting any failure to report.

287. The Panel strongly supports urgent and robust implementation by Member States, in particular troop and police contributors, and the Secretariat of the recommendations in the recent report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services of the Secretariat on the evaluation of enforcement and remedial assistance efforts for sexual exploitation and abuse by the United Nations and related personnel in peacekeeping operations. The Panel supports, in particular, the recommendation that the Secretariat introduce the revisions to the memorandum of understanding with troop and police contributors necessary to enable quick decisions at the mission level and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse allegations in a more objective, reliable, timely and transparent manner.[16]

288. Regarding remedial action, the Panel supports the proposal of the Secretary-General to create a common trust fund to fund prevention activities, awareness-raising and community outreach and the maintenance of a roster of service providers to victims. This would not itself compensate individual victims. The Secretariat is therefore encouraged to initiate consultations with Member States, ensuring the active involvement of local communities and victims of sexual exploitation and abuse, to develop appropriate forms of compensation. Member States should also support the creation by the Secretary-General of an effective and adequately resourced victim assistance programme to support individual victims and children born as a result of sexual exploitation and abuse.

289. The Secretariat should develop standard transparent approaches to deal with troop and police personnel contributions from countries whose human rights record and performance present challenges. Governments whose forces are listed in the annual reports of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict for engaging in grave violations against children and on conflict-related sexual violence for being credibly suspected of committing or being responsible for patterns of rape and other forms of sexual violence in situations of armed conflict should be barred from contributing troops to United Nations missions until they are delisted.

290. When the Security Council authorizes the deployment of non-United Nations forces, it should establish requirements for reporting and accountability to the Council. Where allegations of human rights violations or sexual exploitation and abuse by non-United Nations forces acting under a Council-authorized mandate are reported to a parallel United Nations presence, that presence must promptly convey a report of such allegations to the regional organization or Government concerned.

291. **With respect to addressing abuse and enhancing the accountability of United Nations peace operations, the Panel recommends that:**

(a) **The Secretariat and Member States pursue the immediate and robust implementation of the Secretary-General's proposed measures to strengthen accountability for sexual exploitation and abuse, including: (i) the establishment of immediate response teams to gather and preserve evidence of sexual exploitation and abuse for use in investigations, and which may be called to support investigations dispatched by a troop-contributing country, as well as judicial authorities in the host State; and (ii) the completion by both the**

Secretariat and Member States of investigations into allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse within six months of their being reported;

(b) Member States, in particular troop-contributing countries that have exclusive criminal jurisdiction over the members of their military contingents, immediately and vigorously investigate and prosecute all credible allegations of misconduct and crime, especially sexual violence involving rape and minors, referred to them;

(c) Member States report to the Secretariat, on a proactive, timely and systematic basis, on the status of investigations, including prosecution and disciplinary actions taken. The Secretariat should include such information, by contributing country, in the Secretary-General's reporting to Member States, noting any failure to report;

(d) Member States, in particular troop and police contributors, and the Secretariat should ensure the urgent and robust implementation of the recommendations in the recent report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services into sexual exploitation and abuse by personnel of peacekeeping operations;

(e) Member States should support the creation by the Secretary-General of an effective and adequately resourced victim assistance programme to support individual victims and children born as a result of sexual exploitation and abuse;

(f) The Secretariat should develop standard transparent approaches to deal with troop and police personnel contributions from countries whose human rights record and performance present challenges. Governments whose forces are listed in the annual reports of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict and on conflict-related sexual violence should be barred from contributing troops to United Nations missions until they are delisted;

(g) Where allegations of human rights violations or sexual exploitation and abuse by non-United Nations forces acting under a mandate authorized by the Security Council are reported to a parallel United Nations presence, that presence must promptly convey a report of such allegations to the regional organization or Government concerned.

7. Responsible presence

292. In recent years, peace operations have become increasingly committed to integrating a "green footprint" into its activities. The Panel notes the issuance by the Secretariat in 2009 of the environmental policy for United Nations field missions aimed at incorporating environmentally responsible policies throughout the life cycle of United Nations peace operations. The environmental policy should be implemented across all United Nations peace operations and compliance strengthened, including through regular reporting to Headquarters. The Panel welcomes the efforts by the Secretariat to incorporate environmental resource planning in the establishment of missions. The Secretariat and missions should ensure that peace operations participate effectively in the broader United Nations efforts to mitigate climate change led by the Secretary-General, and address the impact of peace and security on the environment and provide analysis to the Security Council on potential peace and security risks posed by environmental

challenges. The Panel encourages Member States to provide the Secretariat with the expertise necessary to minimize the impact of the deployment of a peace operation on the local and regional environment.

293. The deployment of United Nations peace operations can act as a valuable economic and capacity stimulus to the local community. Peace operations can and should strengthen both the economy and national capacities by sourcing their goods and services requirements locally to the extent possible.

294. **With respect to ensuring the responsible presence of United Nations peace operations, the Panel recommends that:**

(a) **Environmental impact assessments be carried out as part of the assessment and planning of new missions and undertaken regularly during the lifetime of the mission;**

(b) **Peace operations maximize opportunities for local procurement through the updating and revision of the existing rules and regulations to prioritize local capacities.**

8. Duty of care: safety, security and crisis management

295. Since 1948, more than 3,300 personnel have lost their lives serving in United Nations peace operations. Such sacrifice in the service of peace is a solemn testimony to the need to continuously improve the safety and security of personnel. It must be recognized that safety and security has a strategic impact, including on resource generation and effective mandate execution.

296. In recent years, the security situations into which United Nations peace operations are being sent have become more volatile. More than 90 per cent of personnel in political missions and two thirds of all peacekeepers are deployed in situations of ongoing conflict. Decisions to deploy United Nations presences into such settings need to be based on recognition of the increased risk and the need for security and safety systems appropriate to the threat environment.

297. In these more difficult settings, the safety and security of peace operations personnel should be a paramount concern of the entire United Nations system, including the Secretariat and agencies, funds and programmes, and Member States. The United Nations needs to systematize and professionalize its information collection, analysis and dissemination. The exchange of information on security threats between the Secretariat, peace operations and Member States should be improved.

298. A strategic review recently undertaken by the Department of Safety and Security of the Secretariat recommended the consolidation of civilian field safety and security personnel in peace operations into a single integrated system managed by the Department. The Panel concurs and encourages the full and timely implementation of that important change, along with the implementation of improvements to methodologies and tools for security risk assessment and incident reporting. The Panel notes the importance of ensuring that the United Nations security management system is "fit for purpose" for contemporary threat environments, including in peace operation settings and in support of their activities.

299. Several key areas merit particular attention: (a) application of the system to military and police contingents; (b) capabilities, technologies and force preparation

necessary to cater to asymmetric threat environments in the next five years; (c) provisions for national staff, including administrative constraints and insurance considerations, and the impact on national staff who often bear considerable risk with little recompense and support in emergency situations; (d) implementation of the programme criticality framework to stay and deliver, in particular ensuring that its implementation is led and coordinated from Headquarters; and (e) a framework for the appropriate use of guard units and private security contractors.

300. Missions without military components face a particular security challenge, and the Panel supports the use of small military or police contingents as guard units to provide protection to all peace missions, as well as the use of properly vetted private security contractors where they are a necessary option.

301. Improved medical and health care for peace operations is required and is in the interests of all personnel and contributing countries. Medical planning needs to be undertaken early, and suitable medical capabilities need to be on the ground from the outset. A medical performance framework is required, including the introduction of standards for the quality of care provided and practitioner, hospital and medical evacuation capabilities. The Secretariat needs the resources to define and oversee such a framework for both civilian and military personnel. Innovative approaches, such as the specialist support package concept, should be considered to mobilize high-quality medical service providers from contributing countries, potentially through reservist practicing doctors and nurses. Where high-quality contributions are not available, the United Nations may need to use privately contracted options.

302. The frequent need for United Nations peace operations to deal with crises has highlighted the requirement for a unified organizational crisis management approach. The Secretariat should develop a comprehensive crisis management policy, checklists and exercise regime for its peace operations. The policy should address management accountability, preparedness planning, response coordination and information flow both in the field and at Headquarters. All United Nations peace operations and their United Nations country team partners should ensure rigorous crisis preparedness and undertake regular mission-wide crisis management simulation exercises, supported by crisis management experts. Headquarters must provide support to the field in crisis situations, including through personnel surge, expedited procurement and other support.

303. The administrative aspects of fatalities management, including notifying the next of kin, convening a board of inquiry, administering death and disability compensation and ensuring official recognition of service, are distributed across different offices and are disaggregated between military, police and civilian personnel. The system would greatly benefit from a centralized capacity for managing the repository of information and ensuring that all elements of the process are carried out in a timely manner. In the light of the risks to, and at times sacrifices made by, the men and women serving in United Nations peace operations, the Panel believes it essential that the Organization keep the death and disability compensation for all personnel categories under regular review and that timely adjustments be made as necessary.

304. United Nations personnel, both civilian and uniformed, are increasingly the direct targets of intentional attacks. When such serious crimes against its personnel take place, the United Nations undertakes internal investigations, such as boards of inquiry. The United Nations also reports such incidents to the host Government and

requests that it undertake the investigation necessary to identify the perpetrators of such attacks and to hold those found responsible accountable, with penalties commensurate to the gravity of the crime in accordance with their obligation under the applicable status-of-mission or status-of-forces agreement. However, cooperation between the host Government and the United Nations is, at times, perfunctory or non-existent, including in the case of fatal attacks. States hosting United Nations peace operations must vigorously pursue those responsible for such attacks, including through prompt investigation and effective prosecution in accordance with international human rights law, including the right to due process.

305. **With respect to safety, security and crisis management, the Panel recommends that:**

(a) **The Secretariat implement expeditiously the recent decision to integrate the security resources of the Department of Safety and Security and of missions under a single integrated management model and implement updated methodologies for security risk assessments and incident reporting;**

(b) **The Secretariat review the implementation of the United Nations security management system to ascertain that it is "fit for purpose" for contemporary threat environments and ensure that the programme criticality framework is implemented to help peace operations to take decisions on the acceptable risk to stay and deliver;**

(c) **Where necessary, missions without military components be provided with small military or police contingents as guard units;**

(d) **The Secretariat establish a medical performance framework for United Nations peace operations, including clear capability standards, and minimum standards for all United Nations medical capabilities, both civilian and military;**

(e) **The Secretariat develop a comprehensive crisis management policy for its peace operations and that their United Nations country team partners ensure that rigorous crisis management plans and procedures, including mass casualty incident plans, are in place and reviewed and exercised regularly;**

(f) **The Secretariat centralize responsibilities for fatalities management to ensure better information management and oversight of administrative processes in support of the next of kin of the deceased;**

(g) **The General Assembly keep the rates of compensation for death and disability under regular review and adjust accordingly;**

(h) **States hosting United Nations peace operations vigorously pursue those responsible for attacks against the United Nations, including through prompt investigation and effective prosecution in accordance with international human rights law, including the right to due process.**

9. Strategic communication

306. United Nations peace operations often struggle to communicate their messages to the local population and the broader global community. Sometimes peace operations are slow and reactive in getting their messages out; at other times the messages are convoluted or obscure. Still at other times, peace operations appear

mute and introverted, which conveys its own very particular message. Communicating strategically with the local population, parties to conflict, regional and other international actors and partners on the ground is a critical component of an effective political strategy. This requires understanding key audiences and reaching out to them with messages that make sense to them and reflect their reality.

307. The outdated public information approach of the United Nations must be transformed into more dynamic communications efforts that reinforce the overall political approach and the role of the mission. A better understanding of key audiences will help to identify appropriate means of communication; the role of national staff and national communication experts is essential to this. Embracing communication methods that are now standard practice elsewhere is critical if United Nations peace operations want to be relevant in a fast-moving world. Missions should embrace cost-effective and well-tested technologies to enhance communications. More effective use of digital media should generate feedback on the mission and its communication effort and help to fine-tune messaging. Missions should ensure that mid-level and senior leaders are trained as effective communicators and are able to relate to and be understood by the local population. Senior mission leaders should be supported by communications experts.

308. All peace operations should prioritize the development of tailored and dynamic communications strategies that support mandate implementation. The strategies should maximize relevant communication tools for particular audiences, with a particular understanding of the importance of radio for many host populations and of social media for youth. Senior mission leadership, including uniformed personnel, should proactively and directly engage in meeting with people across the country. This will not only help the local population to better understand the mandate of the mission and its activities but also serve to build trust and a sense that the United Nations is with them. Missions should use modern technology and ensure that they are supported by personnel capable of carrying out strategic communications, instead of one-way information dissemination. The Panel believes that the integrity and good performance of mission personnel is the most effective tool of communication with the people of the host country.

309. **With respect to strategic communications, the Panel recommends that, at every stage of the mission life cycle, the Secretariat and missions put in place strategies for the planning, recruitment and resourcing of mission communications teams aimed at ensuring interactive two-way communications with the local population and ensuring that United Nations peace operations use modern and appropriate communications approaches and technologies.**

10. Technology and innovation

310. The United Nations must embrace innovation and the responsible use of technology to bridge the considerable gap between what is readily available to and appropriate for United Nations peace operations and what is actually in use in the field today. The Panel's deliberations coincided with the submission of the report of the Expert Panel on Technology and Innovation in United Nations Peacekeeping (2015).[17] The report contains long-sighted and pragmatic recommendations. Of particular importance are the findings relating to the introduction of widely

[17] Available from http://performancepeacekeeping.org.

available and affordable technologies that can enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the basic structures and services that provide the backbone for mission success, including innovations to support safety and security, shelter and camp management, health and well-being and the protection of civilians.

311. Technology should not be an end in itself and must serve clear priorities. Field technologies should be user focused, be reliable in field conditions and include training for personnel in its use. Emerging yet relatively accessible new technologies could be deployed immediately to assist in meeting needs for more effective and efficient command, control and communications arrangements and information-gathering activities in all, but especially in the more dangerous, operating environments. In such settings the Expert Panel recommends important solutions for employing systems to provide customizable geographic information system-enabled solutions to enable better surveillance, monitoring and reporting tools to improve the safety and security of personnel as they implement their mission.

312. The implementation of the Expert Panel's recommendations should be sequenced by first introducing "enabling" technologies, which in turn permit the further and fuller use of other technologies. To that end, the Expert Panel recommended investment in a new, whole-of-system approach to the use of technology. A prioritized strategy should guide efforts to equip missions with more up-to-date enabling technologies, such as larger bandwidths and improved latency for communications, as well as masts, miniature unarmed unmanned aerial vehicles and carrier technologies. The introduction and use of new technologies must be implemented with full transparency and in consultation with Member States in order to maintain a high degree of confidence in the United Nations commitment to privacy, confidentiality and respect for State sovereignty.

313. **With respect to technology, the Panel recommends that technology be a key reform agenda for the future and that the Secretariat ensure that new technologies introduced are field focused, reliable and cost-effective and that their introduction be driven by practical needs of end users on the ground. Early priorities should aim to deliver essential "enabling" technologies, as well as new approaches to improve: (a) safety and security; (b) early warning and protection of civilian-related capabilities; (c) health and well-being; and (d) shelter and camp management.**

D. Strengthening the foundations: systems, structures and resources

1. Responsive, accountable and field-focused support

314. The budgets of peace operations are more than four times larger than the rest of the United Nations Secretariat's combined budget. A total of 90 per cent of Secretariat procurement is undertaken for its peace operations, and 55 per cent of Secretariat staff serve in field missions, more than 80 per cent in hardship duty stations. The scale of mission activity, the difficult and changing operating environments, the requirements for specialized personnel and activities not even contemplated at Headquarters, and the high rotation and turnover of personnel often overwhelm and even paralyse an administrative system designed for static and stable duty stations. Yet United Nations field operations continue to be tied to and undermined by an administrative framework that simply does not enable effective and efficient field operations.

315. The messages that the Panel has received from the field have been resounding: United Nations administrative procedures are failing missions and their mandates. Force commanders and troop contributors are exasperated by bureaucratic constraints that fail to meet reasonable demands in difficult settings. Senior managers complain of deep dysfunction and are frustrated by the inability to recruit rapidly on the one hand and the obstacles to removing poor performers on the other. Staff members are discouraged and frustrated by administrative red tape and a lack of mobility and career development. Administrative risk controls poorly suited to the field leave mission leaders and administrators feeling constrained from taking common sense decisions in pursuit of the mandate. Too often, the choice is between what makes sense for the mission and what complies with unwieldy procedures, and usually the choice involves doing what is compliant. The price of such risk controls is extremely high in terms of operational and reputational risk as a result of underperformance against mandates.

316. The regulations of the Organization provide the basis for its administration; however, internal implementation policies and procedures frustrate the efficiency and effectiveness of missions. The Secretariat must ensure that its internal administrative framework is made fit for field operations, the largest and most visible part of its work. Such an effort must address the need for accountability for both results and resource management. The current approach of separating responsibilities for delivering mandates from the authority to manage resources leads to duplication, delay and bureaucratic friction and does not provide the assurance that resources are being used most effectively, efficiently and transparently.

317. In 2007, the Secretary-General proposed the establishment of the Department of Field Support as a single entity with the full responsibility, authority and resources necessary to ensure that missions have what they need, when they need, to succeed in their mandates. However, the Department does not have the delegated authorities required to deliver the required support to the field, and Secretariat administrative procedures have not been reviewed to meet the demands of the field. This perpetuates a dependence on "exceptions" to Headquarters-focused policies, administrative procedures and practices not well designed for field conditions and creates significant transaction costs between different Headquarters departments and missions.

318. The Panel believes that the Secretary-General should delegate to the Department the authorities necessary to deliver timely and effective support to the field, to put in place transparent, streamlined procedures and instructions and to eliminate informal processes and mechanisms that delay effective and efficient solutions for the field. The Department should develop new, more field-responsive and results-oriented administrative procedures, including with ex ante advice from the Office of Internal Oversight Services to ensure compliance of such procedures with United Nations regulations. Where adjustments in rules and regulations may be required, they should be proposed to the General Assembly as soon as practicable. Streamlined work processes for the field should be integrated into the new enterprise resource planning system, Umoja, to ensure that such a generational opportunity to modernize work processes and improve transparency and accountability is not missed. The Department of Management should strengthen its role in providing central oversight and quality assurance, relying less on day-to-day controls and focusing more on monitoring the Department of Field Support through

enhanced performance reporting and effective ex post accountability for both results and resource use.

319. In the interim, the Secretary-General should immediately put in place a framework for extraordinary measures that allows expedited and effective administrative procedures, particularly for procurement and human resources, to obtain the right people and equipment for a rapid crisis response or a mission start-up. They should be time-bound for a reasonable duration and extended if warranted. Sound ex post accountability measures must be included, with careful documentation of decisions taken. The use of such special measures in crisis situations in the past has proven the operational merits of such an approach and has demonstrated that such fast-track procedures can be implemented without significant accountability concerns arising. Such extraordinary measures should be incorporated into the overall revision of a field policy and procedural framework.

320. A more field-focused administrative framework must be matched by strong assurances of responsible and accountable management of resources. Heads of missions should have recourse to advisers and audit resources to support implementation in the field. A small, risk management capacity staffed by experts in United Nations rules and regulations should be available to provide advice to mission senior management on ensuring compliance and to help to detect and remedy any potential problems as they arise. Better business analytics to oversee and report on resource utilization will help to empower managers, including heads of missions and directors of mission support, in the oversight of resources, and they must at all times be vigilant and ready to respond to indications of waste or mismanagement of resources.

321. The Panel has heard widespread concerns about United Nations human resources management. There is no topic that elicits greater frustration in the field across all levels of staff. Existing procedures for recruiting staff and bringing them on board are onerous and slow. Tools for accelerating recruitment, such as rosters, have not delivered sufficient results; they work only when quality candidates are on the roster and are willing and able to deploy. In operating environments that demand more tailored and more flexible United Nations peace operations, it appears that human resources policies may be moving in the opposite direction. The Panel strongly believes that heads of missions should have greater authority to move personnel within the mission to meet changing demands as they arise. Peace operations also need the flexibility to bring on board for a specified period, and then release, individuals with specific skills and experiences relevant to a particular mandate or situation. Solutions for staff mobility should prioritize those staff who have served for many years in hardship duty stations. Yet increasingly standardized human resources solutions, benchmarked to meet common denominator needs of the United Nations in headquarters environments, are limiting the possibilities for more flexible staffing to respond to evolving needs on the ground.

322. Centralized approaches to policymaking must recognize that the field has needs distinct from those of Headquarters and offices away from Headquarters. For too long, the field has been regarded as an inconvenience to standardized Headquarters approaches. The Panel believes that the field must be fully and thoroughly consulted as administrative policies are developed, to ensure that the differentiated requirements of field operations are taken fully into consideration when major policy initiatives are proposed. At present, field perspectives and needs

are not adequately reflected in the development of human resources and other policies, and the voice of field practitioners is too often not heard by legislative bodies during deliberations on policy matters. Field missions are currently not represented in the Human Resources Network despite requests to that effect. In many other advisory bodies, the field is but one voice among many, despite its overwhelming size and the distinct nature of its needs. Assessments of the potential impact of proposed policy changes on field operations should be an obligatory step in any policy review, and the results of such assessments should be presented to the Secretary-General and Member States for consideration.

323. **With respect to ensuring responsive, accountable and field-focused support, the Panel recommends that the Secretary-General:**

(a) **Empower the Department of Field Support with the full delegated authorities required to support the efficient administration of field-focused policies and procedures and to expedite service delivery and recruitment. The Department of Management should provide a strategic quality assurance framework and oversight of performance;**

(b) **Empower the Department of Field Support to develop specific human resources and other administrative procedures for field missions to facilitate more rapid deployment and tailored management of civilian staff, with appropriate delegation of authorities to heads of missions to better manage the reassignment of personnel within their missions;**

(c) **Support senior managers' accountabilities in the field through risk management and advisory resources to assure them that mandated tasks can be delivered in an effective manner, while operating in compliance with all applicable rules and regulations;**

(d) **Immediately establish standing special administrative measures for mission start-ups and crisis response, which would go into effect upon certification by the Secretary-General of a crisis or emergency, for six months on a renewable basis;**

(e) **Ensure that field needs and perspectives are adequately reflected in any proposed new policies and policy changes, including through full and thorough consultation with field missions, including with heads of mission, and an assessment of field impact.**

2. Results-focused and innovative resourcing

324. The growth of United Nations peace operations in recent years coincided with a period of sharp global economic contraction, particularly for some of the Organization's largest financial contributors. With the resulting concerns about the affordability of field operations, the Organization has responded to considerable pressure to cut costs. For instance, efficiency measures within operational budgets and staffing levels of peacekeeping have resulted in real and significant cost reductions of 17 per cent over the past five years, when measured against the number of military and police personnel and adjusted for inflation. However, the overall budget envelope has expanded in line with the establishment or expansion by the Security Council of new peace operations, often in challenging political, security and logistical environments.

325. In the resourcing of missions, a stronger Member State partnership is required in the General Assembly to ensure a focus on effective and cost-effective mandate implementation. A greater focus by the Assembly, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the Secretariat on results, rather than the incremental costs of mission budgets, could provide the basis for a new partnership in the resourcing of missions.

326. The presentation and review of mission budgets is overly focused on reviewing incremental annual variations across budget lines, particularly on staff posts, rather than on the strategic drivers of cost and on results. The Organization's budgeting approach was designed originally to scrutinize stable and staff-oriented Headquarters budgets but makes less sense in highly dynamic field missions. As an example of current practice, every creation, elimination, restructuring, move or profiling of a staff post requires the approval of the General Assembly. As a result, negotiations on mission budgets are often spent on the minutiae of the level or placement of individual civilian staff posts, rather than on strategic issues or cost drivers. As a consequence, the same process is essentially mirrored within the Secretariat's internal processes and controls.

327. Significant work is required to improve the presentation of the results-based budgeting methodology for peace operations to make it, in fact, more results-oriented and to enable Member States to discuss more strategically the cost of delivering outputs and the achievement of results and value for money, rather than a concentration of minor variations in budgets and detailed staffing requirements. As it exists, the results-based budgeting system is an abstract mechanism that fails to link genuine indicators of achievement to resources. Instead, it focuses on outputs that are often of questionable value in measuring performance in mandate delivery, such as a focus only on such "outputs" as the number of patrols conducted, rather than on more effective results-based measures, such as levels of security in an area of operations.

Innovation in resourcing

328. In the past decade, some of the most significant systemic enhancements in United Nations peace operations have come from improvements to the resourcing of missions, in particular for mission start-ups. Today, missions have access to expanded financial commitment authorities, allowing them to mobilize resources and begin procurement more quickly in support of troops and staff in the field. Missions can now also gain access to equipment in the strategic deployment stocks before a budget has been approved. Such tools, combined with better-tailored start-up budgets, support not only faster initial deployments but also more realistic budgets. The Panel encourages Member States to restore momentum in reforms to better resource peace operations.

329. As noted in section III.B.4, Mobility and flexible support, real opportunities exist to continue to build on and support innovative approaches to field mission support, particularly at the regional level, such as through: coordinated regional movement planning; regional supply chain solutions; shared administrative services; regionally based advisers and experts; and standby aviation contracts. Although these have faced early hurdles, they present opportunities to improve operational effectiveness and efficiency across missions. Global and regional support systems present an opportunity to increase operational effectiveness and resource efficiency,

including by reducing the footprint of staff in missions. In addition, the development of improved business analytics at the field and Headquarters levels will be essential to better resource planning within and across missions and will provide further information to help to address Member States' concerns regarding efficient and accountable resource utilization under the Organization's financial regulations.

Programmatic funding

330. Missions generally deploy with people but have limited and often no access to programmatic resources to help in delivering their mandates. This can lead to a heavy footprint without the capacity to deliver, for example when police trainers deploy but are unable to gain access to resources to conduct training courses for host country counterparts. The inability to achieve rapid results slows mandate implementation and draws out the duration of the mission. Building on the early and important experiences of reinsertion funding for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, the Panel is of the view that, where appropriate, the Secretary-General should request programmatic funding from the assessed budget to support the delivery of mandated tasks. The availability of such funds would enable missions to focus more on delivering programmatic results than on inputs by staff alone. That programmatic focus, in turn, can help to enhance accountability for results rather than focusing on inputs and ongoing staff activities.

331. **With respect to resourcing, the Panel recommends that the Secretary-General propose the use of resources from the assessed budget for programmatic activities in support of mission mandates.**

3. Funding and backstopping of political missions

332. Political missions are an integral part of the United Nations peace operations and core to the work of the Organization today. For the United Nations to succeed in its core responsibility of preventing conflict and its relapse, predictable funding for political missions is essential. Political missions often struggle to deliver mandates because of limited resources and backstopping support from Headquarters, and they have not always had access to sufficient start-up funding from commitment authority resources. The relatively static biennial budget process has greatly reduced their agility. Political missions now account for more than 20 per cent of the regular budget, and their dynamic nature, responding to various crises in the world, creates significant distortions in the regular budget. This has led to arbitrary cuts in the budget of political missions to balance the regular budget, which in turn has had an impact on the predictability of funding for political missions.

333. The Panel notes the recommendations contained in paragraph 85 of the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/66/7/Add.21) in 2011 in response to the report of the Secretary-General on the review of arrangements for funding and backstopping special political missions (A/66/340), namely:

(a) Establish a special and separate account for the funding of special political missions that would be budgeted, funded and reported upon on an annual basis with a financial period of 1 July to 30 June;

(b) Authorize special political missions, with the prior concurrence of the Advisory Committee, to access the Peacekeeping Reserve Fund for up to $25 million per decision of the General Assembly or the Security Council relating to the start-up or expansion phase of field-based special political missions;

(c) Authorize special political missions, with the prior concurrence of the Advisory Committee, to access up to $25 million in strategic deployment stocks in advance of the corresponding budget appropriation if a decision of the General Assembly or Security Council relating to their start-up or expansion results in the need for expenditure;

(d) Make the support account available to all departments and offices to fund their variable backstopping requirements in relation to field-based special political missions and confirm the responsibility to support special political missions, while maintaining the existing arrangements for the financing of the support account and the Global Service Centre.

334. **With respect to the financing of political missions, the Panel recommends the immediate adoption by the General Assembly of the four recommendations listed in the preceding paragraph, and contained in paragraph 85 (a) to (d) of the twenty-second report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2012-2013, on the review of arrangements for funding and backstopping special political missions.**

4. Headquarters management and reform

335. Revisiting structures at United Nations Headquarters should be the last, not the first, consideration in efforts to improve the impact of United Nations peace operations. However, after careful consideration, it is the Panel's view that the current Headquarters configuration is hampering the effective assessment, design and conduct of United Nations peace operations and, more generally, the Secretariat's work in support of international peace and security. Without changing the structure, the essential shifts outlined in the present report will not be effectively implemented.

336. The present departmental configuration gives rise to, or exacerbates, significant problems affecting peace operations: assessment, strategy and planning are often delinked from in-depth knowledge about the affected country and region; solutions are designed by proponents of functional "supply-driven" perspectives on how the United Nations responds; peace operations are locked into a binary choice even as they struggle to adapt to shifting situations on the ground; planning across multiple departments to collectively stand up and then support one mission is hampered by difficult administrative transitions, different cultures and separate accountabilities; operational and administrative demands of large missions reduce the space for the development of political strategy; specialist thematic and support services are not readily available to all types of peace operations; and institutional divides drive unnecessarily complicated decision-making requiring senior-level interventions, which can resolve a particular problem but not the underlying dysfunctionalities.

337. Previous efforts to solve those problems have sought to work around existing structural dysfunctions through senior-level bodies, such as the Policy Committee

and the Executive Committee on Peace and Security, and such planning forums as integrated task forces. However, they have failed to deliver meaningful change in the underlying institutional dynamics. Departmental in-fighting saps morale within and is the source of ridicule from outside. These dynamics expose the United Nations to accusations of duplicated effort and bureaucratic immaturity, where talented Secretariat professionals are focused less on delivering solutions and more on bureaucratic skirmishes. Simply put, Headquarters is not delivering the leadership, management or support required for the challenges facing United Nations peace operations today. It is clear from the Panel's consultations and deliberations of the past six months that the status quo is not viable; it must change.

338. Accordingly, the Secretary-General should develop options for a significant restructuring of the Secretariat's peace and security structures. That restructuring should significantly reorganize existing departments responsible for political affairs, peacekeeping operations and field support and include the Peacebuilding Support Office and other specialized resources that support peace operations in the field. It should also address the necessary delegations of authority of those departments and their accountability to the Secretary-General. Consistent with this proposal, and to provide a single coherent resourcing solution for the future, a related proposal should be developed for a single "peace operations account" to finance all peace operations and related backstopping activities in future.

339. It is clear that, in the period ahead, both the peace and security agenda and the economic and development agenda will place extraordinary demands on the Organization. We recommend, therefore, that the Secretary-General consider the proposal made previously by the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change in 2004 to create an additional Deputy Secretary-General position, responsible for peace and security. With one Deputy Secretary-General focusing on the economic and social development work of the United Nations, the second Deputy Secretary-General should oversee a significant change in the way that existing Headquarters peace and security structures are configured and how they deliver to the field.

340. The options for a new structure should seek to deliver, inter alia, the following results:

(a) Political strategies must drive each United Nations peace operation, with international and regional efforts mobilized in support thereof;

(b) High-quality integrated assessment, analysis and strategy formulation planning must produce context-driven and realistic solutions;

(c) Regional dimensions of conflict must be addressed systematically in close cooperation with relevant regional organizations;

(d) Unity of effort and integration must be strengthened across United Nations efforts in support of a mandate, including with peacebuilding activities and the United Nations Development Group;

(e) Clear Headquarters-field authority, command and control must be provided for all military deployments, with tighter integration of operational and logistics concepts of operations and delivery;

(f) Accountability must be strengthened through the alignment of responsibilities to deliver results with the necessary authority to utilize resources;

(g) Specialist civilian and uniformed capacities, as well as logistical and administrative support services, must be available to all United Nations peace operations as required;

(h) Organizational resilience to ensure the effective management of crises in missions, including multiple concurrent crises, must be strengthened;

(i) Evaluations must be undertaken, independent of the implementation entities, to inform strategic reviews and course corrections;

(j) Legislative support and reporting must be strengthened for the Security Council and its subsidiary organs, the General Assembly's Fourth Committee, including the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, the Fifth Committee and the Peacebuilding Commission.

341. The Deputy Secretary-General responsible for peace and security would oversee and manage the changed structures and be accountable to deliver on the said results. Such a restructuring would likely require moving towards either a single political lead department or entity, or two regional political departments, in both cases drawing on the operational and support entities for uniformed and civilian specialist advice and support of a separate department/entity. Those resources would be available in support of all types of peace operations. The proposal should be cost-neutral. It should rationalize, not grow, existing requirements and merge, not proliferate, the numbers of offices and departments. Structural adjustments alone, however, cannot solve all challenges. They must be matched by the clear assignment of responsibilities, authorities, accountabilities and incentives to meet the desired results, with strong leadership and management to overcome compartmentalized mindsets.

342. The Panel recognizes that such a restructuring will require time for consultation and design. In the interim, however, the Secretary-General should move forward immediately with proposals to address the key criteria outlined above and help to pave the way for a more substantive restructuring proposal. Such proposals should include the establishment of an analysis and planning function for peace operations reporting to the Secretary-General drawn from existing Secretariat resources.

343. **With respect to Headquarters management and reform, the Panel recommends that the Secretary-General:**

(a) **Develop options for restructuring the Secretariat peace and security architecture in accordance with the expected results outlined in paragraph 340, with a view to strengthening leadership and management, removing compartmentalized mindsets at Headquarters and ensuring stronger and more effective field-oriented support to United Nations peace operations;**

(b) **Noting that in the period ahead both the peace and security agenda and the economic and development agenda will place extraordinary demands on the Organization, consider the creation of an additional Deputy Secretary-General position, responsible for peace and security;**

(c) **Propose the immediate establishment, from existing Secretariat resources, of an analysis and planning capacity to support United Nations peace operations, reporting to the Secretary-General;**

(d) **Develop a proposal for a single "peace operations account" to finance all peace operations and related backstopping activities in future.**

IV. Uniting our strengths

344. Ambitious mandates, difficult political and operational landscapes, intractable conflicts and high expectations are intimidating hurdles for contemporary peace operations. The recommendations contained in the present report are aimed at better preparing United Nations peace operations to meet those and other challenges in an uncertain future. The recommendations reflect the collective wisdom of the broad range of partners and stakeholders of United Nations peace operations with whom the Panel has consulted over the past six months. They are aimed at reflecting the voices of people whom peace operations are deployed to serve and protect; the experience and aspirations of regional partners with whom the United Nations must seek to work ever more closely to collectively manage and respond to today's and tomorrow's threats; and the commitment of the broader community of nations to the maintenance of international peace and security.

345. Arrayed to meet those challenges are the strengths of the United Nations: its impartiality, driven by its unique global composition; a broad convening authority to reach out to all actors and seek political resolution; a capacity to fuse political strategy and operational responses in the field; an ability to reach into the reserves of 193 Member States for solutions and resources to address conflict; a depth of experience in responding to crises around the world; and a surprising capacity to adapt.

346. At the heart of the Panel's conviction about peace operations is the message that the United Nations must unite its strengths — of politics, of partnership and of people — to meet those challenges. This means that, where deployed, United Nations peace operations must be mandated and empowered to support the political resolution of threats to international peace and security. To succeed, United Nations peace operations must find a way to strengthen partnership at all levels, namely with regional organizations, with host Governments and with the local population, to overcome deep-rooted conflicts. United Nations peace operations must answer to "We the peoples", the ultimate beneficiaries of peace and the survivors of conflict. Their perceptions and their assessments, particularly those of women and youth, are the critical barometer of the success, or failure, of United Nations peace operations.

347. With the support of Member States, United Nations peace operations can deliver more effectively, on behalf of the international community, on their core objectives to prevent conflict, protect civilians, achieve the peaceful resolution of conflicts and sustain that peace. Through those efforts, the United Nations must balance its full array of peaceful and coercive measures, including the use of force, to advance peace and protection.

348. From the broad consultations, it is clear that in such matters there is no single right answer, but rather only difficult decisions made in the knowledge that the consequences affect real people and may carry severe consequences. The Panel has been humbled by the complexity of issues before it and the wisdom shared with it to help to understand them. From that exchange, the Panel has arrived at a consensus on the content of the present report and hopes that it will provide the Secretary-

General and, through him, the broader membership with some navigational aids for those who must chart the difficult terrain.

349. Aware of the fiscal environment and the constraints of Member States, the Panel notes that, in the light of planned and likely future reductions in existing peace operations, and if sequenced appropriately, the recommendations in the present report could be implemented without an increase in the total costs of United Nations peace operations. In addition, the Panel believes that a review should be undertaken of peace operations that have been in existence for more than five years to assess their effectiveness and to identify the potential to reduce the breadth and ambition of some mandates, and to reduce resources accordingly. The Panel also notes that, if the Security Council and Member States agree to a sequenced mandate and budgeting process, this would have a significant potential for cost savings in the budgets of United Nations peace operations, as would investments in the ability of the Organization to engage earlier in conflict prevention and to respond more rapidly to emerging crises, rather than responding later to a worse situation, with a heavier mission footprint.

350. The broad front of improvements in the present report will require the United Nations to recommit itself to strengthening its peace operations as a tool for all, in support of common purposes. Although the proposals in the present report will require different efforts from several parts of the Organization, progress will require the United Nations as a whole to move forward together convinced of the need to improve United Nations peace operations. To succeed, commitment must be explicit and action sustained.

351. The next decade will present many challenges. It has the potential to bring further crises. The United Nations is a tool in the hands of Member States. Used responsibly and supported by political engagement and the resources of committed Member States, United Nations peace operations can be fashioned into a stronger instrument for managing the daunting peace and security challenges in the years to come.

352. In a village in South Sudan, once again wracked by violence and a collapsed peace, a young girl still has high expectations. She expects those blue helmets and the people who sent them to help her people to find peace so that she can have a future. She is right to do so, and she is not alone. For Nyakhat Pal, and for the millions affected by conflict, United Nations peace operations — the United Nations — must unite its strengths and move forward to meet the challenge together.

Annex

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